

No. 837

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7 Cents

FAAME AND FORTUNE

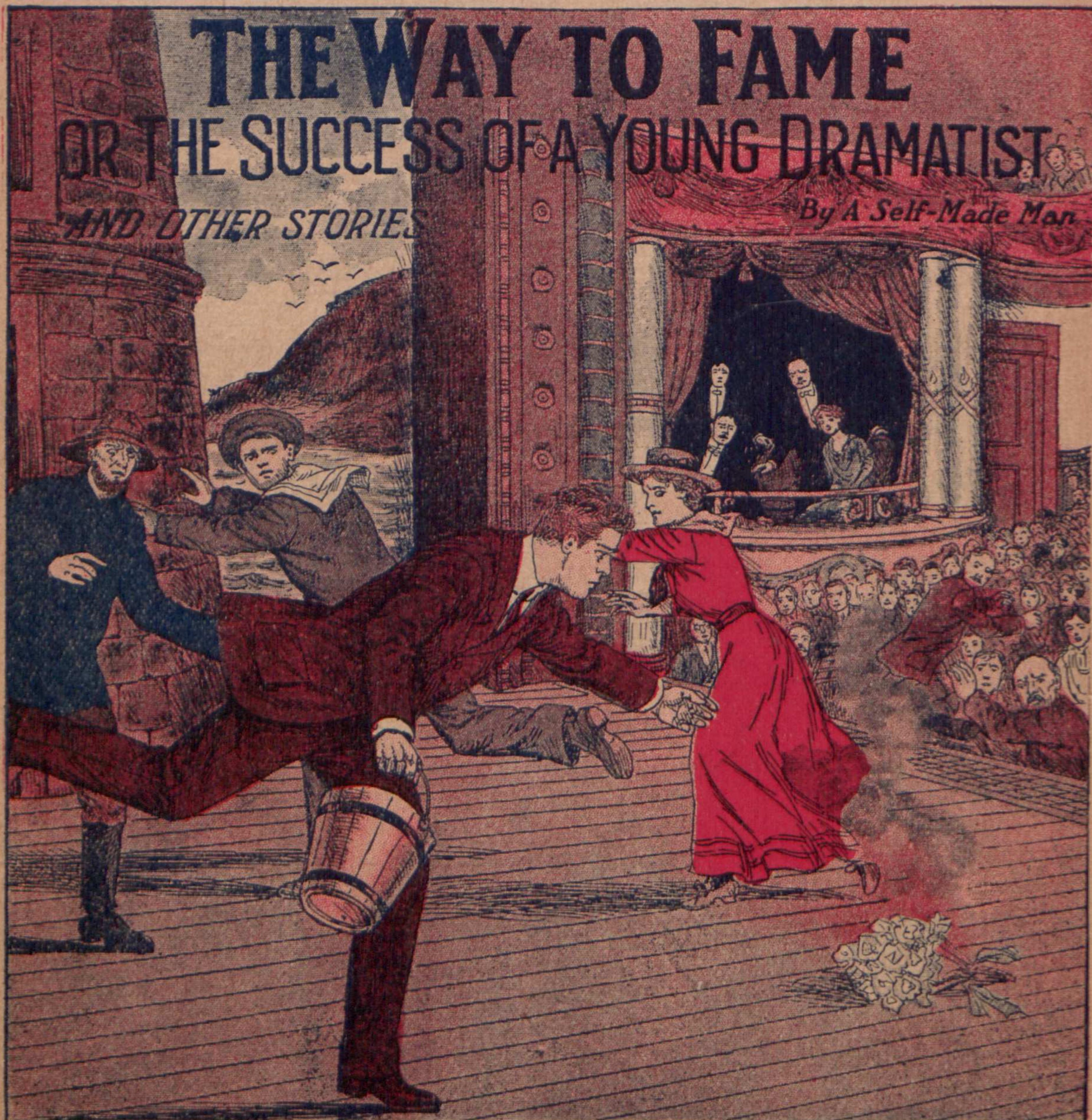
STORIES OF BOYS **WEEKLY.** WHO MAKE MONEY.

THE WAY TO FAME

OR THE SUCCESS OF A YOUNG DRAMATIST

AND OTHER STORIES

By A Self-Made Man



Arthur, standing in the wings, understood the situation. Seizing a bucket of water he rushed upon the stage "Run, Ruby—it's a bomb!" he cried. With a shriek the girl turned and ran, while the audience rose in a panic.

FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY

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NEW YORK, OCTOBER 14, 1921.

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THE WAY TO FAME OR, THE SUCCESS OF A YOUNG DRAMATIST

By A SELF-MADE MAN

CHAPTER I.—The Young Playwright.

"What's that you say? You've written a play?" said Josh Davis, property man of "Henderson's All-Star Uncle Tom's Cabin Combination," to Arthur Burton, his general assistant, as the two yanked a large trunk into one of the dressing rooms of the Glendale Opera House, one sunshiny morning in spring.

"Yes, pop," replied Arthur, eyeing the man intently to see how he took the astonishing piece of information.

Josh Davis, who, by the way, wasn't Arthur's father at all, but merely the person who had brought him up from a very immature age, stared hard at the boy.

"So that's what you've been wrestling at all this time, eh? I've noticed you've been mighty industrious with a pencil and paper whenever you got a minute to yourself, and I've wondered what scheme you were trying to get up. If you remember, I asked you several times, but you would not tell me what you were up to. So you've written a play? Well, I might expect something like that of you, for you're a right smart boy. I'm glad it's nothing more than a play that has taken up your thoughts. I was afraid when I brought you out on the road with me you'd get stage-struck and want to be an actor."

"I don't care about becoming an actor, though I like the stage better than anything I know of."

"I'm glad to hear it—I mean that you don't take to acting. It's a dog's life. I ought to know, for I've been connected with the theater most of my life, and it's only the topnotchers who make enough out of the show business to retire on in their old age," said Davis, as he took a fresh chew at a small piece of navy plug, and regarded the label-covered trunk rather disapprovingly.

We may as well remark here that this conversation took place many years ago, when the theatrical profession was not as prosperous as it has since become. Those were not the happy days of the thespian. And particularly was the lot of the traveling provincial actor one of hard work and poor pay. Lucky indeed was he to have money enough at the close of a season of forty weeks to tide him over the other twelve. But it wasn't every actor who enjoyed forty weeks of continuous employment.

Traveling shows were continually going to pieces, usually from lack of patronage and the manager's financial inability to tide over a succession of "frosts." Then the company, perforce, was

disbanded, and the actors who had signed for forty weeks on the "low-but-sure" principle, found themselves on their uppers. Josh Davis had been through it all though he wasn't a real actor. He had done well enough as a stage carpenter at city theaters, but when fate enticed him on the road as a property man, stage carpenter, prompter and actor of small parts, he soon realized that his lot was not a happy one.

Mr. Davis, who had nothing to do with the theatrical profession and who remained in a cheap tenement in New York in company with her foster-son, Arthur Burton, was in constant receipt, while she lived, of hard-luck stories; but she having died the preceding summer, Josh took Arthur on the road as his helper, in the Henderson Combination, at the princely wages of \$10 per, and "pay his own" expenses, transportation excepted, and that is why the hero of this story was helping his foster parent remove the baggage, props and rolls of faded scenery from the wagon, which had brought them from the station, and stood at the stage entrance, to the stage and dressing rooms.

"I guess you're right, pop," replied Arthur, as they started back to the wagon. "I was a bit stage-struck when I started out with you, but I've got over it, though this show isn't such a bad one. The people are not hams, though they would hardly catch on at a city theater. I will make an exception, and that is Ruby Rand. She's a bang-up Topsy. It's my opinion she is carrying the show. If she dropped out, I'm afraid we'd soon have to take to the ties."

Josh grinned sardonically at the word "ties." In those days it sometimes happened that the members of a disbanded company were so badly stranded that the united available cash of all hands was not enough to furnish transportation any distance for one of them. At that moment a blast of music came from the front of the opera house. It was the band about to start the parade through the town to advertise the show. The male members of the company were hired with the understanding that they "double on brass," meaning that they were expected to perform on some wind instrument in the band. This means of drumming up a "house" was the approved thing with touring companies, notably of the "Uncle Tom" kind. Sometimes Arthur was called upon to pound the bassdrum, and he always performed his part with great vigor, to the great admiration of the village urchins. On this occasion his services had not been called into requisition, for

the son of the proprietor of the opera house had volunteered to do the stunt. Arthur and his pop wrestled with a couple of more trunks and then tackled the rolls of scenery. As soon as everything was off the wagon, Josh Davis mopped his brow and paused outside the stage door to take a whiff at his pipe, a thing not permissible inside. That gave the boy a chance to return to the subject of his play.

"What kind of a play is it, Art?" asked Josh, with a glimmer of interest.

He was very fond of his foster-son, and had a private idea that the boy would turn out to be a great man some day. Although Josh knew that budding playwrights had about as much show of coming to the front, in those days, as the average actor had of becoming a millionaire, still there was no reason, in his opinion, why Arthur should not prove the exception to the rule, if he had the right stuff in him.

"It's a drama of human interest, pop," replied Arthur.

"Human interest is good, son," grinned Josh, sucking at his pipe and blowing a cloud.

"Don't make fun of it, pop. It's a play dealing with real life."

"What else could it deal with, you suckling Shakespeare? Is there a star part in it?"

"Yes; I've written it for Miss Rand."

At the mention of the name, Josh's countenance began to assume strange contortions, alarmingly like a person about to be attacked by a fit. In reality, he was trying to suppress an irresistible inclination to laugh, and the effort caused him to swallow a mouthful of smoke and that brought on a coughing spell which nearly strangled him.

"What's the matter with you, pop?" asked Arthur, after pounding him on the back with the same vigor he was accustomed to apply to the bassdrum.

"Nothing, son," said the property man, wiping his weeping eyes with his bandana. "I was just thinking. Ha, ha! He, he! Ho, ho!"

"For the love of Moses, what are you laughing at?"

"I was just clearing my throat of the smoke," said Josh, with another prolonged chuckle.

The fact was, Josh, having had many opportunities for observation, had noticed that his foster-son was "sweet" on the fifteen-year-old soubrette of the company, and was greatly amused thereat. Ruby Rand was not only a talented but a sweet little girl, and Josh liked her immensely. Her mother, though Josh doubted the relationship, did "old woman" parts, and otherwise made herself useful in the Henderson aggregation. She was an actress of extensive experience, particularly in "Uncle Tom" companies, whose "departed" husband, as she called him, had done the heavy part of "Legree" for a long time.

Ruby began her dramatic career as "Little Eva," and made a great hit in the part. She was kept at it until Mrs. Rand signed with Henderson. That astute manager declared that Ruby was altogether too robust now for the character, and after a try-out cast the young lady for "Topsy." That he had made no mistake in ad-

vancing Ruby was proved on the first night the company showed. She made the hit of the piece, whereupon her mother demanded more money. As Henderson never separated himself from a cent more than he could help under any circumstances, and as he had Mrs. Rand's signed contract for a very moderate stipend in his possession, it goes without saying that she didn't get it. Ruby and Arthur had grown very chummy since they became acquainted, notwithstanding that the young lady was regarded as the "star" of the show, while Arthur was considered of no importance except to be at every one's beck and call, when not helping his "pop," or doing a small part on the stage to pad out the cast of characters on the program. What Arthur didn't think of Ruby is hardly worth mentioning, and what Ruby thought of Arthur—well, the young lady wasn't giving it out for publication. When together, they were as happy as they could be, and you may well believe they got together as often as possible. Ruby knew all about Arthur's play before he wrote a word of it, and she helped him a whole lot with suggestions while he was writing it. And the girl never said a word to her mother or anybody else about it, which proves that some women can keep a secret if they try real hard. Ruby was interested in the play because she knew Arthur was writing it for her—just her, as though the drama naturally had other characters, and most of them were good ones.

The part, as the boy developed it, suited her from the ground floor up, and more than once when Arthur read scraps of it to her, he narrowly escaped a hugging, which would not have greatly distressed him, though it surely would have sent all kinds of thrills through his nerves. There was only one thing that Arthur objected to in connection with Ruby and that was the fact that she had to black up for Topsy. It spoiled her loveliness, he said, though all the black in the world couldn't prevent Ruby from looking a ravishing little darky girl. If we have dwelt too long on Ruby, it was for two reasons—because she is the heroine of this story, and also to give Josh Davis time to recover his composure.

"So you've written the play for Ruby Rand?" he said, with twinkling eyes.

"Yes, pop, and she's going to produce it and score the hit of her life," said Arthur enthusiastically.

"Oh, she is?"

"Yes."

"Has she an 'angel' in view?"

Josh alluded to a financial backer.

"Oh, she has a pull with Henderson because she's his chief asset, and she says she's going to persuade him to put it on next season."

Josh, however, got no further information about Arthur's play then, for at that moment a shrill, girlish scream rang out on the air. The startled man and boy, in common with several pedestrians on the narrow street, turned their gaze toward the near-by corner. Around it came a beautiful young girl at top speed, and after her came one of Henderson's trained bloodhounds at a pace which threatened to close the gap in half a minute. The girl was Ruby Rand.

"Good gracious!" cried Arthur. "Nero has gone mad!"

CHAPTER II.—Two Hearts With But a Single Thought.

Josh Davis was not built of the stuff heroes are made of, and so the intimation that the star bloodhound of Henderson's bunch of three, who nightly, and at matinees, chased Eliza over the broken "ice" in full view of the audience, had gone mad, caused him to beat an expeditious retreat inside the stage door. Arthur, on the contrary, though staggered by the scene, saw only one thing, and that was the peril Ruby was facing. The girl was more to him than anything in this world, and after his first gasp he rushed to her aid.

What cared he if the dog was mad? Ruby must be saved at all hazards. Without a weapon of any kind he sprang between the little soubrette and the animal, and seized the dog by its throat with both hands. Then ensued a terrible spectacle—a desperate fight between a powerful and ferocious bloodhound and a fairly muscular boy, with all the chances against the latter. The cry of "Mad dog!" was now in the air, and none on the scene dared go to the boy's assistance. Even Josh himself, much as he thought of his foster-son, could not muster up resolution enough to leave the shelter of the stage door. Then something happened that nobody expected, and it was the only thing that saved Arthur's life. Ruby had seen the boy spring in between her and the pursuing dog. Fleeting and imperfect as he appeared to her frightened eyes, she recognized him.

With a cry, she bravely started back to help her young champion, casting her former terror to the winds. She had nothing but her own little white hands to depend on, and what were they against that beast! And yet she saved her boy admirer for all that. Her eyes lighted on a cobblestone near the curb. She snatched it up and brought it down on Nero's head with all her force. With a gasping howl the dog rolled over quite stunned, while Arthur fell with him, his strength now quite spent. Ruby sank beside him and took his head in her lap.

"Arthur—dear, dear Arthur, speak to me! Please do!" she cried, in an agony of distress, caressing his face with a touch that only love can match.

But Arthur was done up by his tremendous exertions to keep the dog's poisoned fangs from his flesh, and he could not at once answer her appeal. When Josh saw Ruby's plucky action he fairly gasped. So did the bystanders who had retreated to various doors in the vicinity.

Josh was the first to reach the young pair, and in his hands he carried a piece of line, with which he proceeded to tie the bloodhound's forelegs together, and then his hind ones, so that when he should revive he would be quite helpless to make any further attack on any one.

"My! you two had a narrow squeak of it!" he said, as he worked away.

"He saved my life," said Ruby tearfully and excitedly.

"Of course he did. It's mighty little he would not do for you, Miss Rand," said Josh beamingly.

"He's a dear, brave boy."

"I always believed him to be plucky, and now I

know it; but, my! you're just as plucky yourself!"

At that interesting point, Arthur, who, finding Ruby's arms about his neck, had not hurried himself to open his eyes or move, concluded that it was time for him to brace up, and he did so, to the girl's great delight. She testified to that, as well as her gratitude, by giving him two warm kisses full on his lips, and Arthur felt that he couldn't have been better rewarded. The three dogs were always marched, attached to leashes, at the head of the band, and such was the case on this occasion.

They had never given any trouble before, consequently their owner, who accompanied them, was taken by surprise when Nero, the finest of the three, suddenly went into a fit, then broke away and started back over the route at top speed, biting at everything, animate and inanimate, he passed, though fortunately without inflicting a wound on any one. He first showed symptoms of making an attack on people, who scattered before him like chaff, as he neared the opera house. Then it was he spied Ruby tripping along the sidewalk. He recognized her and went straight for her. Ruby and Nero had always been the best of friends, the dog constantly showing that he was very fond of her.

It is said that when a dog goes mad the first thing he thinks of is to attack the person he is most attached to. That was the case in this instance. When the girl saw Nero making for her, with blood in his eyes and foam flying from his jaws, and heard the cry of "Mad dog!", she took alarm at once, and took to her heels at the same time. She did not scream till she realized that the dog was almost on her, and then her cries brought Arthur to her rescue. The owner of the bloodhounds had chased after Nero, leaving the leader and cornet player of the band to hold the other two animals. The incident did not stop the actor-musicians from proceeding forward on their route, after Nero broke away, for business was business, and they were not sure that the dog really was mad. The owner of Nero arrived at the stage entrance about the time that Josh had finished tying him. The animal bore a terrible gash from the cobblestone, and the owner was in a funk lest he was on the point of giving up the ghost.

This will not be wondered at when we say that he valued the beast at \$500. After looking at the dog and feeling of his heart, he ran into the theater and presently returned with a bottle containing a reviving preparation.

"Run to the corner saloon and get a chunk of ice to put on his head, Burton," he said, peremptorily to our hero.

Arthur obeyed the order, and soon fetched the ice, which was secured to the reviving animal's head. In the meantime the news of the affair had reached Henderson as he was coming out of a newspaper office, and he hurried to the theater with visions of damage suits flitting across his mind. If the dog had bitten even one resident of the town he would be up against it hard. He would be obliged to give bonds in order to get his property out of the town, and as the chances were he'd lose the suit brought against him, he would have a judgment to settle. Henderson's profits had not been so large that season that he

could afford to part with any of it. He was a manager of twenty years' standing, and was well known on that circuit, which he had toured several times with his "Uncle Tom" aggregation.

This year the people had shown a disinclination to flick to see the famous old threadbare Southern drama, and as a result he had done poor business. He had already decided to shelve "Uncle Tom" at the close of the tour and put out a repertoire company next time. He intended to put Ruby Rand at the head of the new company, and during the summer expected to secure a number of pirated manuscripts from a Chicago agency that did business in that line. His plans embraced a Western drama with a hero who was always drawing a pair of guns on the villain and thus produce the thrilling situations; a city play with a ragged newsboy for Ruby to star; a rural drama with a hoydenish heroine, full of humor and pathos; and perhaps something else not yet decided on.

All this was in Henderson's mind as he hustled along the street toward the rear of the opera house, where he heard the dog had gone, and he realized that all his plans for next season hung in the balance. At length he reached the scene of excitement when Nero came to and was making an ineffectual struggle to secure his freedom.

"Anybody been hurt?" he asked excitedly.

"Not that I've heard of, sir," said Jackson, the dog's owner.

"Where did the dog break out and get away from you?"

Jackson stated about the place.

"How came you to take the dog out when he was not in right condition?" demanded Henderson, in a tone which showed he was not pleased.

"He was all right when we started."

"He couldn't have been," insisted the manager. "You were careless, and if any one has been bitten, where do you suppose the show will land?"

Jackson denied that he had been careless, and they had a run-in over the matter.

"That dog may die and I'll be \$500 out," he growled.

"You'll be out nothing! You've got the animal insured."

"Only for a small sum."

"Small sum! You've got \$300 on Nero."

"That won't pay me. It would take me a year to train another like him, if I could duplicate him."

"He isn't dead yet. Take him inside and try and bring him around for the matinee."

"He'll appear at no matinee to-day, nor is he likely to go on to-night, either."

"He seems to be coming around all right."

Nero was quiet, and looked quite rational now. After a time he was removed to his kennel, with Arthur's help. Josh related the narrow escape of Ruby and Arthur to the manager. Henderson was much concerned over the girl's peril, but was not at all interested about the assistant property man. There was only one Ruby, but the woods were full of aspiring young property assistants. Ruby followed Arthur to the stage after he helped lead the groggy dog to his quarters, and then remained there talking with him till Josh appeared and called on his foster-son to help hang the scenery rolls and set the stage for the first act. By the time they had got every-

thing shipshape it was noon, and they thought of their dinners.

The company was stopping at the Glendale Hotel, a second-rate caravansary, where they got the usual theatrical rates, each person paying his own bill, as Henderson only paid railroad fares. The proprietor assessed single room and board at \$2, but where the people doubled up it cost them \$1.75. The people usually picked out cheaper houses, but it easily cost Arthur all of his salary to meet his board, doubling up with Josh, without figuring on washing and spending money, which he had to get from the old man, whose pay only amounted to \$20. The combined salary of Ruby and her mother was but \$35, and their running expenses seldom came under \$25.

What the other members of the company got is immaterial. It was decidedly low, but so far it had been sure, the "ghost" walked regularly every Monday, even though business was far from satisfactory. Josh and Arthur found most of their associates at dinner when they entered the dining room and they took their places and got busy. The Nero incident was the talk of their table, and the general impression prevailed that it would result in a full house that afternoon and evening.

CHAPTER III.—The Dark-Featured Man.

After dinner the company gravitated toward the opera house. A bunch of small boys was hanging around the front of the house waiting for the box office, in charge of the proprietor's son, to open up. The two billboards in front bore two stock pictures—one representing Topsy standing on one foot, the other bent in, and her wool done up in curl paper, with a poster above giving the date in big red type, and one below acquainting the public with the fact that the cut represented Ruby Rand as Topsy, which Arthur declared to be a gross libel; the other showed Eliza crossing broken ice with a baby in her arms and several bloodhounds in hot pursuit. When Arthur arrived at the theater he was accosted with the usual howl from the more important members of the company with regard to their dressing rooms.

"You've given Jinks and me the worst in the bunch!" snorted the heavy man.

"I did? See pop. He picked them out," replied the boy. "I don't see what you're kicking about. At last night's stand there were only two dressing rooms, and all you chaps had to use one between you. What do you want—a private room to yourself? If I'd known it in time, I'd have had one built for you."

"Don't get funny," said Harlow, the heavy man. "You're not the comedian of the show."

"No, Mr. Jinks enjoys that distinction."

"Never mind, you'll be an actor some day if you live long enough," said Jinks.

"I have no ambition to be one."

"What did you join the show for, then?"

"To be with pop, for one thing."

At that moment Miss Spender, who played Eliza, came up to Arthur.

"I wish you'd come and move my trunk across the room," she said. "You always do put it in the wrong place."

"Certainly, Miss Spender," said Arthur politely. The comedian followed the heavy man into the dressing room and they started to open their trunks and get their make-up boxes. Their united stock of grease sticks was rather low, and they had to borrow from one another to make up deficiencies. The same state of things existed in the other dressing rooms. Fortunately, Ruby was not short of prepared burnt cork or her make-up would have suffered. The mad dog incident did the business, and there was a crowded house at the matinee, which brought a look of great satisfaction out on Henderson's face. He always stood at the door to see that things were coming his way. Subsequently he counted the house and went over the manager's box sheet. Of course, Ruby was received with thunders of applause, and that put her on her mettle. She was called before the curtain at the close of each act.

At the end of the third act Ruby and Arthur appeared together with the recovered Nero, his head bandaged up, between them. They received an ovation, which the girl increased by throwing her chocolate-colored arms around the boy's neck and kissing him.

Mrs. Rand was not over pleased at this demonstration on Ruby's part, but as she knew Arthur had saved the girl's life she could not make more than a mild protest. She had not failed to notice that Ruby showed a decided preference for Arthur, and as the boy was only an inconsequential member of the show she strongly objected to the growing friendship between the young people. Ruby, however, had a will of her own and she said that, in her opinion, Arthur was worth the whole show put together, and she intended to be his friend.

"But he's only a boy, and will never amount to anything as an actor," replied Mrs. Rand, in a grouchy tone.

"I don't care," retorted the girl. "He'll make a reputation some day as good as any actor."

"Pooh! Nonsense! There's nothing in him."

"How do you know there isn't?"

"I'm a woman of age and experience and have sized him up."

"You don't know him that much," and Ruby indicated the length of her finger nail. "I'm not a woman, and I haven't your experience, but I know what's in him. I could open your eyes so big," joining her arms in a circle as large as she could reach, "if I wanted to."

"You're a silly child," said her mother petulantly.

"'Spect I wasn't born but jest raised," said Ruby, in Topsy tones.

Then she executed a wild negro dance around the dressing room, lost her balance against her trunk and disappeared head-over-heels behind it.

"For Heaven's sake, child!" cried Mrs. Rand, aghast.

"Golly! I's all right, mammy!" said Ruby, popping her black face up behind the trunk. "I know I's deworstest nigger in old Varginny. De Ole Nick hab me fo' suah."

There was a thump on the door. It was Arthur calling Topsy for the last act. He did not consider it necessary to call anybody else. He had enough to do without that, but he always had an eye out for Ruby's interest.

"I'm coming, Arthur!" cried the girl, bounding

through the doorway and jumping into his arms. Having acquired the habit that day, she was carrying it to the limit, and we can't say that the boy offered any objection. Rather was he tickled from the soles of his feet up. The company had another packed house that evening and Ruby's curtain calls were repeated. Between the acts Josh and Arthur set the scene for the next one, and packed up whatever scenery was not to be used again, thus by the time the show was over the property man and his assistant had most of the stuff ready to be taken to the station by the wagon standing at the stage door ready to receive it. As soon as the trunks were ready, they were added to the load and the wagon drove off, Josh and Arthur riding with it. The company sometimes traveled by a night local and sometimes by a morning one, according to the distance to be covered to the next one-night stand.

On this occasion Henderson notified his people that they would take the night train, due at Glendale at ten minutes after twelve. The baggage and scenery was on the platform and the company in the waiting room at twelve. The train failed to materialize at 12.10, nor was it in sight at 12.30. Then the fact developed that it was held up fifteen miles down the road by a wash-out, and the agent couldn't say when it would be along.

The manager was at the station, but he was in the office with the agent, smoking. In his hand was his grip containing his share of the receipts of the evening performance. Two o'clock came around and the members of the company were asleep on the hard waiting room benches. Ruby's head rested on Arthur's shoulder, her pretty face upturned in the dim gaslight. The boy had encircled her with his arm, and in that position she felt very comfortable up to the moment she dropped asleep.

The rest of the company, with two or three outsiders, were scattered about on the other benches. Such was the state of things when a well-dressed, dark-featured stranger, above the average height, with his face half hidden by the turned-up collar of his overcoat, entered the room. He went to the stove in the middle of the room to warm himself, for the night was a chilly one. The dark-featured man looked around upon the occupants of the benches until his gaze rested on Ruby's upturned face. Then he uttered an exclamation and stared fixedly at her.

"What a likeness!" he muttered. "And just the age the child would have been now had she lived. Had she lived!" he repeated, in a tense whisper. "How do I know she really is dead? I took the woman's word for it and paid her well. Suppose she deceived me! In that case—"

His gaze roved to Mrs. Rand, whose countenance was in the shadow.

"That doesn't look like her. She was a well-built woman, not stout and shapeless, like this person. And yet twelve years often works a great change in a woman. She had a husband, John Rand, and that man isn't he. And that boy looks as if he might be the girl's brother. At any rate, he is with her. I must see that woman's face and make sure. If she is Bertha Rand, after all, then will I be assured that I have been hoodwinked, and for my own safety will be compelled to take measures to protect myself."

He glanced toward the open ticket-office window, through which he heard the ponderous tones of Manager Henderson's voice, and then glided over to the bench on which the four show people reclined. Bending down, he peered into the face of Mrs. Rand. Some instinctive intimation of the man's presence bending over her aroused the actress and she started up suddenly. Her gaze encountered that of the dark-featured stranger. The recognition, after an interval of twelve years, was mutual. Mrs. Rand started back with a frightened ejaculation.

"Edward Forres—"

"Hush!" hissed the man, grasping her roughly by the arm. "Thirteen years ago I confided a girl baby to your care with the understanding that she was to be forever removed from my path. One year later you assured me she was dead and you offered to shew me where she was buried. I believed you, and paid you the sum of money agreed upon. Now I find you deceived me."

"Deceived you!" muttered the woman.

"Yes; for I see beside you a girl who is the living image of—"

His voice was drowned in the rush and roar of the Atlantic Express, which swept by the station at that moment. Mrs. Rand recovered her nerve during the brief interval the express was passing.

"Well, I admit I deceived you. I lacked the resolution to put the child out of the way as I had agreed to do. Instead of doing so, I've brought her up as my own daughter. She believes I am her mother. So what's the difference? You're safe enough."

"Safe! With my secret in your hands?"

"It's been in my hands these thirteen years. Have I disturbed you during that time? Have I asked you for another cent, though Heaven knows I've often needed it? No, Edward Forres—"

"Silence, I say! If you breathe my name, I'll strangle you!" he said fiercely.

"No fear of you attempting that here. Most of these people around me are my associates—members of the company to which I belong. Ruby also—"

"Ruby!"

"That's her name—the name I gave her. I'm teaching her the business—have brought her up in my profession, and she's an ornament to it. She has wonderful talent, and will become a great actress some day if she lives."

"I dare say," he sneered; "if she lives," he added significantly.

"But you will not harm her now!" cried the actress, with some energy. "You would not dare to—"

"What! Will not a man dare to protect himself? While she lives, and you, too, I stand on the brink of a precipice. At any moment you possess the power to take from me what I have possessed for thirteen years. Think you I am a fool to—"

"She shall never come between you and your interests. I swear it," said the actress earnestly. "You paid me for my silence and I will keep my word with you. Do not touch the girl. Her talents represent a fortune to me. I ask no more than I can make out of her. Let us alone and go your way. You will never be disturbed by us—never!"

"You deceived me once, Bertha Rand. I can't trust you again," he said, with a dark look.

A long, shrill whistle down the road announced the coming of the belated local. The man drew back with a smothered imprecation, and some of the sleepers began to bestir themselves.

"Go—go!" cried Mrs. Rand energetically.

The door of the ticket office opened and Manager Henderson and the agent came out.

"Wake up, good folks!" cried Comedian Jinks. "The train is coming."

The dark-featured man walked out on the platform and disappeared into the darkness.

"Thank Heaven, he is gone!" breathed Mrs. Rand. "Fortunately no one has heard what passed between us."

But she was mistaken. Arthur had heard enough of it to assure himself that Mrs. Rand was not Ruby's mother, and that some mysterious peril menaced the little actress.

CHAPTER IV.—The Basket of Fruit.

At half-past seven next morning the local reached Dexter, the next stand of the "Uncle Tom" Combination, after recovering a part of its lost time. The company went in a bus to a cheap hotel where they registered. They got their breakfast as soon as they arrived, and the women immediately retired to their rooms to sleep till dinner time. It was hardly worth while for the men to turn in, for they had to go on band duty at about ten o'clock. The traveling actors of those days were hardened to the seamy side of the profession, and they were accustomed to take things as they came. John and Arthur got the baggage to the opera house, and into the building, and then hurried to the hotel, two blocks away, on a side street, for their breakfast.

As soon as they had eaten it they returned to the theater to put the trunks in the dressing rooms and to set the stage for the first act. They started in to hang the scenery.

"Say, pop, can you keep a secret?" asked Arthur suddenly.

"A secret, son?" answered the old man curiously.

"Yes. I accidentally found out something last night at the station."

"What was it?"

"Mrs. Rand isn't Ruby's mother."

"I've always suspected as much. They don't look no more alike than this op'ry house and McVicker's in Chicago."

"But I've something else to tell you, and you mustn't breathe it on your life."

"I'll be as dumb as an oyster."

"There's some mystery connected with Ruby."

"Some mystery, eh?"

"And it's just like the mystery that envelops the heroine of my play."

"You don't say! How odd!"

"She stands in a certain man's way."

"Who does—your heroine?"

"I mean Ruby."

"Is that a fact?" said Josh, beginning to feel a tremendous interest.

"Yes. Thirteen years ago, when Ruby was about two years old, this man gave the child to Mrs. Ray to put out of the way."

"Creation!"

"Of course, Mrs. Rand didn't put her out of the way, or she wouldn't be alive now."

"Naturally."

"She told the man, however, that Ruby was dead and buried. He believed her and paid her a sum of money."

"Well?" said the property man eagerly.

"She brought Ruby up as her daughter and put her on the stage."

Josh nodded.

"The man, in the meantime, supposed Ruby was dead. He didn't find out differently until last night."

"Last night!"

"He came into the waiting room at the Glendale station a short time before the train came along. Everybody was asleep. I guess, except Mr. Henderson and the agent—they were talking in the ticket office—and me. I happened to wake up just as he stepped up to the fire. He was a dark-featured man, with the collar of his overcoat pulled up around his ears. He was well dressed, and seemed to be prosperous. Suddenly he looked over at the bench where we four—Ruby, Mrs. Rand, you and I—were. Something seemed to attract him and he came over and looked closely at Mrs. Rand. She woke up and recognized him. I heard every word of the conversation that took place between them, and it has made me nervous about Ruby."

"In what way?"

"That man means Ruby harm."

"The dickens he does!"

"He does, as sure as I'm talking to you. Mrs. Rand tried to stand him off. She promised that Ruby should never interfere with him."

"In what way?"

"I don't know. That's where the mystery is. The man doubted her word, for he said that as she had deceived him once he couldn't trust her. Then our train came in and the man went off somewhere."

"That's a remarkable story, son."

"Yes. Now, dad, you know I think the world of Ruby."

"If actions speak as loud as words, I'll allow you do."

"And I know she thinks a lot of me."

"She showed it by tackling that dog and saving you yesterday."

"It would break me all up if anything happened to her."

"Let's hope nothing will."

"But that dark-featured man means mischief."

"If he butts in on the girl we'll have him arrested. You don't know his name, I suppose?"

"Only partly. It is Edward Forrest—that's all I heard."

"Edward Forrest."

"That isn't all of it. He cut Mrs. Rand short when she started to call him by name."

"It might be Forrester. I knew an actor in New York by that name long ago."

"An actor!"

"Yes, and he was a good one. He played the heavy villain, and he always looked the part even without any make-up. He had dark features and looked like a man who bore the world a standing grouch. What became of him I don't know. Actors come and go. I heard that he went to the

Pacific Coast. At any rate, he left the theater suddenly, and I've never seen him since."

By that time they had the stage set for the first act, and the rest of the cloths pulled up out of sight. The actors came in after their instruments, which were distributed in the several trunks, with the exception of the bass and snare drums. The matinee started that afternoon with only fifteen people in the audience. The third act was on, and Henderson had gone to a neighboring saloon to drown his disgusted spirits in a drink or two, when the audience received an addition to its numbers.

He was a dark-featured man, very well dressed, and about the same build as the man who appeared at the Glendale station on the preceding night. A noticeable difference between the two was that this person wore a heavy brown beard, which concealed the greater part of his face. The man at the railroad station was smoothly shaven, like an actor. He carried a small basket of fruit, done up in tempting style, in his hand. In such a small audience his entrance was noticeable. He took his seat at the back of the house, near where a yawning usher was trying to kill time by matching pennies with himself. Arthur, who was standing at the wings, right second entrance, dressed as a plantation negro, waiting for his cue to go on, saw the newcomer.

Something told him he had seen that man before, though at the moment he could not place him. Just then he got his cue to go on with a couple of supers hired for the occasion, the bunch representing a crowd of darky field hands. Presently Ruby came dashing on to go through a special stunt introduced by her and which always made a hit. The small audience applauded vigorously, and none louder than the newcomer. Then he slapped the usher on the leg, handed him the basket of fruit and candy and told him to take it up to the stage and present it to Topsy.

He handed the usher a quarter to expedite his movements. As the usher only got a quarter for his afternoon's work, the tip had its effect. Down the aisle he went and the basket was handed up to the little actress by the violinist, who was the leader of the limited orchestra. Ruby bowed her acknowledgments and retired behind the wings, followed by Arthur and the other plantation mokes.

"Who says I haven't got an admirer?" laughed Ruby. "I wonder who the man is?"

"Somebody with more money than brains," said Arthur, with a jealous twinge.

"You shouldn't talk that way about him, you jealous boy!" she said. "Aren't those lovely oranges? And those apples—how rosy they are! But those bananas quite take my breath away. I must eat one right away."

She picked a banana out of the basket, when across Arthur's mind flashed the thought of the dark-featured man of the night before. Instantly a dark suspicion occurred to him. Was the stranger in the whiskers this man in disguise? If so, the fruit might be poisoned. There was no doubt that the man was Ruby's enemy and wished her dead. As the little actress pulled back the skin and was about to take a bite, Arthur snatched it out of her fingers.

"You shan't eat it!" he cried, in some excitement.

"Now, aren't you mean!" protested Ruby. "But I don't care. I have three more here, and I shall eat one in spite of you."

"For Heaven's sake, don't! It's dangerous!"

"Dangerous!" cried the astonished girl. "In what way?"

"It's poisoned, and you'll die if you eat it!"

CHAPTER V.—"I Will Protect Her With My Life!"

Arthur's words, as well as his manner, produced a sensation behind the scenes. It is true that the boy had no absolute foundation for his statement, but he believed that this unusual present was an attempt on Ruby's life. The girl herself was greatly startled, and she made no further move to take another banana.

"Why do you say that fruit is poisoned?" said Mrs. Rand, stepping forward.

"Because it was sent over the footlights by a dark-featured man," said Arthur impulsively.

His words produced a startling effect on the actress. With a cry she snatched the basket out of Ruby's hands.

"Give me that other banana," she said to the boy.

"You won't let her eat them?" he said appealingly, as he handed it to her.

"Let her eat them!" cried Mrs. Rand, with a flushed face. "Never! I'd as soon see her fondle a rattlesnake. Child! child! you've had a narrow escape. Henceforth beware of what comes to you over the footlights, for death may lurk even in a bouquet."

The three or four members of the company who stood close by were astonished and puzzled by this sensational episode in their midst. They thought both Arthur and Mrs. Rand must be crazy. It seemed ridiculous to their minds that poisoned fruit would be sent to Ruby by a person in the audience. A mere girl like her would have no enemy capable of such a crime. At least that's the way they figured.

They didn't know what Arthur and Mrs. Rand knew—that Ruby had a deadly enemy who wished her dead.

"What's the excitement here?" said Mr. Henderson, appearing on the scene at that moment.

Miss Spender explained the case to him. At another time the manager would have pooh-poohed the matter. Not so now. Whether he really believed the fruit might be poisoned or not, we cannot say, but he seized with avidity on the incident as supplying groundwork for a sensation that might be circulated around town to the great advantage of the show. Seizing the basket out of Mrs. Rand's hands, he dashed out of the theater and hurried to the police station.

"This fruit and candy was sent over the footlights to my star just now," he said. "Her mother believes it is poisoned, and the act of a disappointed admirer who has been following the show and pestering the girl with his attentions. I beg you will have it tested by a chemist."

The disappointed admirer statement was merely a piece of fiction on the manager's part to lend an air of probability to his surprising story. The police promised to look into the matter. Arthur

didn't see Ruby again till she appeared at the supper table. She gave him a sweet smile and kissed her fingers at him. As he was leaving the table one of the waitresses came over and told him that Mrs. Rand wanted to see him in the ladies' parlor in ten minutes. Arthur went there, a large front room on the second floor, facing the street. In a few minutes the actress came in there alone. For reasons, she had sent Ruby to their room.

"I am very grateful to you, Arthur Burton," she said. "You saved my Ruby's life, and I shan't forget the service. Now, I want to ask you a question or two."

"Yes, ma'am," replied the boy.

"When I asked you behind the scene why you thought the fruit and candy were poisoned you said because it was sent over the footlights by a dark-featured man. What did you mean by that?"

"I'd rather not say," replied Arthur, in an embarrassed way.

"Why not?" she demanded, looking at him uneasily. "Do you know the man? Do you know any reason why he should want to harm Ruby?"

"I was suspicious of him, ma'am," said Arthur evasively.

"But you must have had some reason to be suspicious of him."

"I saw him when he came in the house, and I thought his actions were suspicious. I knew he was a stranger, and it was something out of the common for any one to send such an expensive basket of stuff to a member of our company, even if that member was Ruby. She's only a little girl, you might say, while he's a man of forty at least. His action didn't look right."

"Perhaps not, but instances of strangers sending fruit, candy and flowers to a leading member of a traveling company are not so very uncommon. I see no reason in that for you to suspect that there was anything wrong with it."

"But the fruit and candy were poisoned," said the boy, still trying to evade answering the questions of the actress.

"There is no doubt about that," she said impatiently. "I am not questioning that fact at all. What I want to know is why you seemed so sure that the stuff was unsafe for Ruby to touch."

"What difference does that make, Mrs. Rand?"

"It makes a lot of difference—to me. Do you believe Ruby has an enemy?"

"I do."

"On what grounds?"

"You must excuse me stating my grounds." The actress regarded him intently.

"And this enemy you say is a dark-featured man?"

"Yes. He had bushy whiskers on at the matinee as a disguise."

"Ah! You knew he was disguised?"

"I suspected he was. I know now."

"Arthur Burton, you know more about this man than you will admit. Why do you keep the information from me—Ruby's mother?"

"I have my reasons."

"And they affect Ruby?"

"They do. She will be in danger of her life right along for reasons best known to that rascal."

"Do you know his reasons?"

"I do not."

Mrs. Rand breathed a bit easier.

"It is useless for me to question you further, for I can see that whatever information you possess on the subject you mean to keep to yourself. You think a lot of Ruby?"

"I admit I do, and Ruby has told me that you are not pleased because we like each other."

"No matter. That is past now. A very serious problem confronts me—the preservation of my little girl from that man. I want your co-operation, Arthur Burton. I want you to help me protect her," she said, with excited earnestness.

"It was not necessary for you to ask me that. I intend to do it. It is my one purpose now to see that harm does not come to her. I shall protect her at every hazard—with my life, if necessary."

"Thank you for that assurance, Arthur. I believe you mean it. How you have made the discovery concerning this dark-featured man I know not, but I will admit this much to you, that I am myself aware that she has a relentless enemy, who I am now persuaded will leave no stone unturned to compass her death. And let me tell you he is no common man. He has money to help him achieve his purpose. If we are to save Ruby, we must never relax our vigilance over her a moment."

"You can depend that I won't, Mrs. Rand," replied Arthur, and that concluded the interview, as they had to go to the theater.

CHAPTER VI.—Ruby Astonishes Manager Henderson.

When Arthur and Josh left the opera house that night everything was packed up ready for the expressman to take in the morning. The company was to start for the next stand right after breakfast. The name of the town was Cardiff, and it marked the turn in their route back to Chicago. The advance agent had forwarded from Cardiff three days before, his customary letter of advice to Mr. Henderson. As usual, it contained a sheet of paper relating to the hotels of that place which the manager had posted up on the wall at the opera house, on the prompt side. The company was informed to the following effect:

Cardiff Hotel, single, \$2; double, \$1.50 (first-class; I'm stopping here; good bar; four meals).

Harper House, single, \$1.50; double, \$1.25 (rotten; free baths; free bus to and from).

Railroad House, \$1 straight (good; no ladies accommodated; no bus; bar all right; no extras).

N. B.—There's a boarding house on River avenue. Professionals taken. Rates: 25 cents each meal; bed, 35 cents; three in room, 25 cents each. Quality of meals (?).

After perusing the foregoing, the men decided to go to the Railroad House and the ladies to the boarding house. After the poison incident, Arthur decided to follow Ruby, and Josh naturally was willing to go where he did. Among other things, the agent informed the manager that he would have no opposition and that there had not been a show in town for over a week.

"You ought to pull 'em," he said.

Although Henderson had been pretty well over the State, he had never played Cardiff, nor many other of the places on his return route. He had chosen the Cardiff route back to Chicago, hoping it had not suffered from any Uncle Tom combination for some time back. The company reached Cardiff at eleven next day. There was to be no matinee, as the agent had said, "Cut it out." Arthur and Josh escorted the ladies, with their suitcases, to the boarding house on River avenue. The men found no trouble in reaching the Railroad House, for it was just up the street from the station.

The Henderson paper was up about town. It had been there for three days and a half. Everybody with fair eyesight knew that an Uncle Tom's show was coming. That afternoon the band proceeded to inform them that it had arrived. When Arthur and Josh got the scenery and baggage to the opera house that afternoon, they found it to be only a hall on the second floor, equipped with a stage at the back. It was over a hardware and general store, the proprietor of which was the local manager. The entrance was up a long, wide flight of stairs to a landing where a pair of double doors admitted them to the hall. Up this route they had to drag the scenery and trunks, and believe me it was no small job.

As the hall was also used for dances and public balls, the seats were movable, in sections six. There had been a ball the night before and the seats were still stretched in double line around the sides and under the gallery, which was built in the exact form of a crescent, and very narrow at that, so that the supports would not interfere with free movement on the floor. The stage was equipped with a gorgeous drop—a tropical scene—much the worse for wear, and six scene cloths, ditto. Hall and stage were lighted by gas. Josh examined the scenes and let down those that the show had no use for, which was most of them, and hoisted the company's in their places.

He had to do this in order to get the necessary tackle. The stage was the smallest they had run against yet, and what was worse there were practically no real dressing rooms, only a piece of canvas stretched on each side, furnishing a long, narrow passage which was equipped with several shelves, each supplied with a mirror and a wired gas fixture, with movable arms. Although the inhabitants of Cardiff had not been treated to a show for eight days, Henderson's Uncle Tom failed to pull them.

Twenty people in all paid to see the performance, and perhaps thirty more were admitted on passes. The prices were ten, twenty and thirty cents. The deadheads and three others occupied the front seats; while the balance were distributed behind them and in the gallery, where they looked lonesome. The local manager reported \$3.30 as the total receipts. Of that sum Henderson pocketed \$2.15. Cardiff had proved a big frost, and what the traveling manager said about the town and its inhabitants we have no wish to record.

Another week passed away—a week of very cold weather for Henderson's Uncle Tom Combination. It was Sunday and the company was resting at Summerdale, where it had showed the

night before to a slim house. The ghost was due to walk again next day, but Henderson was not thinking about the ghost, but of Chicago. He had money left, but he had no desire to let any more of it get away from him along the return route.

His plan was to get his scenery and props to the station, ostensibly to go by the morning train with the company, but in reality to accompany him, and Mrs. Rand and Ruby, when they flitted that evening by the only late train out east. He hadn't spoken to the actress-mother yet, as he did not intend to have his purpose leak out, but he had no doubt she would meet his views. He had as good as arranged with her, for the services of Ruby next season at a satisfactory salary, and consequently he counted on her standing in with him.

Ruby had finished copying Arthur's drama and that Sunday morning they went over it together. After dinner the little actress asked for an interview with the manager. Wondering what she wanted of him, but thinking it had something to do with the engagement he had offered her and her mother next season—by next season he meant whenever he was ready to start out—he responded. Henderson was stopping at the Summerdale Hotel, the best house in town, and to see Ruby he had to call at the Cataract House, a third-rate hotel, two blocks from his own place. He sent his name to the young lady, written on the back of a card, and was told to walk up to the ladies' parlor, a small, shabby room. She was there with Arthur.

"You wished to see me, Miss Rand?" said Henderson.

"Yes. You made a proposition to my mother to star me next season in repertoire. Have you selected the plays you expect to use?" said Ruby.

"No. I will attend to that when I get back to Chicago. I anticipate no difficulty in fitting you out all right. If the plays available are not right as they are, a little rewriting will make them so. Is that all you wanted to see me about?"

"No. I wanted to let you know that I have secured a play that just suits me, and I want you to put it on."

"You have secured a play, eh? Where did you get it? What kind of play is it? A shorthand copy, I suppose, of some New York success under a new name, altered enough to prevent easy recognition."

"You are wrong. The play was written expressly for me."

"Written expressly for you!" ejaculated the surprised manager. "By whom?"

"By my particular friend, Arthur Burton," and Ruby pointed at the embryo young dramatist.

Manager Henderson fairly gasped.

CHAPTER VII.—Arthur's Play.

"Wha—what do you mean?" said Henderson, thinking the girl was joking.

To suppose that his property man's assistant had actually written a play was, in his opinion, too preposterous to be considered seriously.

"I mean what I said, Mr. Henderson," said Ruby. "Arthur Burton has written a play which I consider just suited to my talents. It is his

first attempt, but what of that if the play is what I want—what I can make a hit in?"

"Hum! You are young yet, Miss Rand, and your judgment as to what is best suited to bring you to the front is hardly to be depended on. Managers usually select the vehicle in which they propose to star a particular artist. They take the risk of success or failure on their shoulders, consequently—"

"We won't argue the matter, Mr. Henderson. Here is the manuscript of the play that I wish to appear in. I want you to give it a careful reading and see whether my judgment isn't correct."

"I am afraid, Miss Rand, it would be only a waste of my valuable time," he said, making no offer to take the manuscript. "It is quite out of the question that an inexperienced boy could produce anything that would be accepted by the public. I could not possibly undertake to go to the expense of fitting out a play written by any one not known as the author of at least one successful play. But waiving that fact aside, there are other considerations that would probably make it inadvisable for me to include this young man's maiden effort in my repertoire for next season. I have practically decided on the kind of plays I want. One will be a Western melodrama; another a city play, and the third a Down-East—"

"This is a Down-East play."

"Oh, it is! A copy, perhaps, of something our young friend has seen performed in Chicago or elsewhere?"

"No, sir," spoke up Arthur, for the first time. "The drama is original with me."

But a skeptical smile rested on the manager's features that disgusted the young dramatist.

"Don't you believe me?" he demanded, with some spirit.

Henderson made no reply, but he was so far influenced as to reach out and take the manuscript from Ruby's lap. He looked at the title.

"Shore Folks. A drama of the New England coast, in five acts. By Arthur Burton," he read.

"Humph!" he said. "Poor title. Nothing in it. Won't go."

To this preliminary criticism the young people said nothing. Henderson turned to the next sheet. Here he found a cast of a dozen characters, to each of which was attached its line of business, beginning with Jack Jasper, leading part, and so on down the men's part to Dave Abbott, responsible utility. Then, underscored, came "Sue Starbeam, adopted daughter of Jude Starbeam, keeper of the lighthouse on Dismal Reef. Comedy lead."

That was the part Arthur had written for Ruby, around which all the characters and incidents circled like planets around the sun. There were two or three other female characters, among them Polly Perkins, a second comedy part. Henderson glanced down the list and could find no fault with it, but still a cast of characters amounts to little unless the play itself is good. He turned to the third sheet. Here was given a synopsis of the drama by acts. Henderson didn't read it, but turned to the next sheet. This contained a brief description of the scene—one to each act. It ran as follows:

"Act I—Outskirts of Oldport Village, opening to the sea, with view of lighthouse in the near

distance. Set cottages, R. U. E., etc., etc. (See diagram next page.)

"Act II—Interior Sue Starbeam's cottage, living room. Practicable door, C.; window R. H., etc., etc. (See diagram.)

"Act III—Same as Act I.

"Act IV—Exterior of lighthouse, sea backing. (See diagram.)

"Act V—Same as Act II."

Practically only two sets of cloths were required, as the marine backing for Act I would answer for Act IV, for the set lighthouse could be placed where it would blot out the perspective view of the lighthouse and sweep of the reef. Arthur was largely indebted to Josh for the construction of the diagrams. He showed the young dramatist how the lighthouse (so far as it was shown, which was not a whole lot) could be built in sections, that when taken apart could be folded up into a small compass for transportation. The set cottage could be built on the same principle, the two sides folding up like a screen, while the red roof was a separate section. Had not Henderson been decidedly prejudiced against the play at the start, he would have noted that, whatever was the quality of the drama itself, the author showed a reasonable amount of practical ability in the stage setting he had given to it. Henderson turned to the diagrams on the next page.

"Who got these up for you?" he said.

"Pop helped me with them," replied Arthur.

"I thought you didn't get them up yourself," said the manager, turning to the first sheet of the play, which he barely glanced over, and then, after running the following neatly written sheets through his fingers, dropped the play on his lap. "Is this in your writing, Miss Rand?" he said, observing the feminine hand.

"I merely copied it from Arthur's penciled sheets," she answered.

"Hum! I suppose you made certain alterations and additions at the same time?"

"Nothing to speak of," replied the girl, anxious that the young dramatist should have full credit for his work.

"So you think the part would suit you?"

"I am sure of it," she said decidedly.

"I'm afraid it would cost too much to put on, even if I found the manuscript suitable to your varied talents and the capabilities of the rest of the company."

"Pop said it wouldn't cost a whole lot to stage. Two cloths, with suitable wings, and two set-pieces, are all that are necessary," said Arthur. "Other adjuncts, such as nets, oyster pots, a profile rowboat, a fireplace and other articles which, in a large theater, would give the necessary local color, could be omitted, of course."

"Humph!"

"Why don't you run over the synopsis and see what the play is?" said Ruby.

Henderson pulled out his watch.

"Really, I haven't the time. I have an engagement and am behind now. To please you, however, I'll take the manuscript along and read it at my leisure," said Henderson, picking up his hat and rising.

He rolled the play up and shoved it carelessly into his outside pocket.

"If there is nothing else, Miss Rand, you will kindly excuse me."

With a bow to the girl, but taking no notice whatever of Arthur, he walked out of the room and out of the hotel. Both Arthur and Ruby looked disappointed at the preliminary reception the play had received. It had been rather chilly, to say the least. It seemed clear that Henderson didn't want it, and but for the fact that he didn't wish to offend his perspective young star he would not have even looked at the sheets.

"That's the way with managers," said Ruby. "They never encourage an unknown playwright. I wonder what show Shakespeare's first play would have stood with a man like Mr. Henderson?"

"The dramatists in his day had one advantage—it didn't cost much to put a play on. There was no scenery to provide, and I don't know that costumes cut a great figure, either. For scenery the theater man put up a sign in plain view which read, 'This is a street,' or 'This is a palace,' or a prison, as the case might be. Oh, stagecraft was easy in those days. All you needed was a clear stage, and a bench or two on either side under the proscenium arch for the bigbugs under whose patronage a show was given," said Arthur.

"Oh, my! Is that the way things were in Shakespeare's time?" asked Ruby.

"So I've read. Shakespeare was an actor, and a manager, too, and that gave him the chance to get his work before the public. He was certainly the greatest dramatist that ever lived, and nearly all the famous actors and actresses since his time owe their standing in the profession to the opportunity afforded them in his plays."

"Well, never mind Shakespeare. I am interested in your play."

"I am interested in my play, too, but I am also interested in the chances of this show going on till we get back to Chicago. Business has been so bad since we left Dexter that pop says he wouldn't be surprised to see the combination go up the spout any day. He thinks Mr. Henderson has nearly reached his limit."

"My mother thinks the same way, and she told me if the show stops she may try to persuade Mr. Jinks and one other member of the company to join hands with us and work our way to Chicago by giving off-hand entertainments wherever we can arrange for the use of a hall," said Ruby.

"I suppose you'd have no use for pop and me," said Arthur wistfully.

"Yes, we would. We'd have to have somebody to look after the business end: To circulate the bills—such bills as we could afford to get out. We couldn't expect to draw very large houses, but if we made our expenses we'd be satisfied."

"You think it will come to that?"

"I'm afraid it will. To-morrow is salary day. If we get a part of our money mother says we'll be lucky."

"My, I haven't got a cent. Yes, I have—one dime. There doesn't seem to be much in the job of assistant property man at ten per, pay your own expenses, except hard work and plenty of it."

"I don't know how much mother has saved. She draws my pay with her own, and though I'm the feature of the show, I've only been getting about

half as much as the leading members because Henderson got mother's name and mine to a contract on the supposition on our parts that I was to play Eva again. But I've grown out of the part, and Henderson saved money by casting me for Topsy."

"That's where he made a ten-strike. If he'd had any other play than Uncle Tom he might have done good business."

"Uncle Tom has made money for him, and he calculated it would do so again."

"I should think the people would shake it for good, it's been out so often."

"They shook it this trip pretty well. We did pretty fair during the first five weeks or so, but since then, except at Glendale and Dexter, there's been as much paper" (passes) "as money in the house."

"Let us hope we'll do better at Corinth to-morrow," said Arthur.

Then he suggested that they take a walk. Ruby was perfectly willing to go anywhere with Arthur, and so they went out in the bright afternoon sunshine and enjoyed a nice stroll together. They made a handsome couple, for Arthur was good-looking and manly, while Ruby was attractive in every way. People turned around and looked after them, wondering who they were, for they were not recognized as player folk. They wandered many blocks away from the hotel, along the shady residential streets of Summerdale. A covered auto slowly followed the same route. Suddenly it stopped and a dark-featured man got out. He walked up to the young people, struck Arthur a staggering blow, seized Ruby, and bore the struggling and screaming girl to the auto.

CHAPTER VIII.—Henderson Parts Company With His People.

Arthur fell to the walk, but he was up in a moment and bounding after the man who had Ruby in his arms. He reached the auto just in time to prevent the rascal achieving his purpose. As the boy grabbed him, he shouted to the chauffeur.

"Beat this young rascal off, Edwards!"

The man jumped out. Then Arthur, in great desperation, smashed the dark-featured man under the ear with all his might. The scoundrel fell dazed against the auto. Arthur tore the girl from his arms and, placing her on her feet, seized her by the hand.

"Run, Ruby, run!" he cried, and off they both started as fast as they could.

The scene had attracted some attention from the immediate residents, who were at their windows, and the chauffeur, perceiving that the game was up, shoved his employer into the car, jumped on his seat and sent the machine rushing up the street. As soon as Arthur saw that they were not pursued, he stopped.

"Oh, Arthur! Arthur! How frightened I am!" said the panting girl.

"I suppose you are. But brace up; the danger is over," said the boy.

"Why did that man attack us?"

"Oh, he had some bad purpose in view," replied Arthur, who did not intend to let the girl know the truth.

"Oh, dear! this is the third time in two weeks I've been in peril, and you have saved me again, your dear, dear boy! If we weren't on the street I'd kiss you a dozen times. Wait till we get back to the hotel."

"Did you get a look at the man? Would you know him again?"

"No. I was too frightened."

"But you noticed that he had dark features, didn't you?"

"I think he had, and he looked like an actor."

"Oh, he's no actor. He's a villain. The kind you meet on the stage sometimes. As bad as the chap in my play who tries to put Sue Starbeam out of the way at the lighthouse."

"He intended to carry me off."

"That was evident, but I put a spoke in his wheel."

"You did, you dear boy. How shall I ever thank you enough?"

"By making a hit in my play."

"I'll do it, but we have got to get it put on first."

"If Mr. Henderson won't do it, I must find some other manager to read it."

And so they proceeded back to the hotel. On their arrival Ruby enticed Arthur up to the parlor and gave him his reward. Then she rushed up to her room to tell her mother about her narrow escape. Needless to say, Mrs. Rand almost had a fit, for she recognized the vindictive hand of the dark-featured man in the incident, and later on she had a talk with Arthur about the affair. While these things were transpiring Manager Henderson had got an expressman, unknown to Josh Davis, to take the scenery and props to the railroad station. The trunks belonging to the company he left at the opera house for the owners to claim. The station agent lived in a cottage close by, and Henderson routed him out to open up the baggage room and check the stuff to Chicago on his mileage ticket. Then he went back to his hotel after learning that the train would stop at Summerdale at 8.50 p. m.

At seven o'clock he entered the Cataract House and sent his name up to Mrs. Rand. She met him in the parlor. Then he told her that poor business compelled him to abandon his tour there and then, and that he had just money enough to take her and her daughter with him on the night train to Chicago.

"How about the rest of the company?" said Mrs. Rand.

"They will have to shift for themselves until I can send them on tickets," he answered.

Mrs. Rand, however, had been through the mill, and she felt sure Henderson had no intention of sending tickets to his people. She was shrewd enough to understand his reasons for looking out for her and Ruby, but she did not intend to accept this concession, except under conditions. The fright she had had over the girl's second escape from her inveterate enemy that afternoon made her feel helpless to protect Ruby without Arthur's aid.

"We will go with you on one condition," she said.

"What is that?" he asked.

"That you take Josh Davis and Arthur Burton along."

"Impossible!" replied the manager.

"Then Ruby and I will remain here."

"What special interest have you in those two?"

"The incident of the poisoned fruit and candy makes me feel that Ruby needs a protector. She has taken a fancy to Arthur Burton in that capacity, and that's why he must go if we go. I include his father, because Arthur would not go without him."

Henderson declared that he couldn't possibly take them, as he couldn't afford it, which of course wasn't true, and he tried to persuade the actress to change her mind, assuring her that Ruby was in no danger of molestation at all.

Mrs. Rand knew better, and persisted in holding out. Henderson finally went away in a grouch. Having made his preparations to skip, he was determined to carry them out. With his general insight into the average run of theatrical people, he had little doubt but he would be able to get Ruby for next season without any trouble. If he slipped up it would be her loss, for he knew he could find some other soubrette who would fill the bill to his satisfaction. So, when the 8.50 train pulled out for Chicago he was aboard of it, and his scenery and props were in the baggage car. Furthermore, he carried away with him Arthur's play, which he had thrown carelessly into the top of his small traveling trunk.

When Mrs. Rand returned to her room she found that Ruby had gone to bed and was sound asleep. After some reflection she rang for a bellboy and told him she wanted the clerk to send Arthur Burton to the ladies' parlor. Arthur, however, could not be found. He and Josh had gone to a social meeting of a society, which was a branch of the order the old man belonged to. They did not return to the hotel till after eleven, and so, in common with the other members of the company, Mrs. Rand alone excepted, he did not learn of the manager's disappearance till next morning when the news was circulated by the elder actress.

Naturally, there was an awful howl from the thespians when they realized that Henderson had skipped without paying them the money due for the preceding week. It then leaked out that the chief members of the company had only received half of their salary the Monday before. An indignation meeting of the men was held and Henderson was roundly scored for his treachery. When the eleven o'clock train left Summerdale, Chicagoward, it carried Harlow, the heavy man; Jinks, the comedian, and three others who were able to pay their way. In the meantime Arthur had sought out Ruby for a consultation.

"Mr. Henderson has got my play," he said, with an anxious face. "He is liable to lose it, or even throw it away. What are we going to do about it?"

"We'll have to follow him to Chicago and take it away from him if he won't agree to produce it."

"I don't want such a man as that to have anything to do with my play," said Arthur. "If it happened to score a hit with you in it, he would not pay me a cent for the use of it. He'd get out of it some way."

"But I haven't any money to go to law about it. Pop couldn't afford to help me, for he will be pretty well strapped when we reach Chicago."

"Well, I don't think I care to go out with the

man again, anyway, so we'll get him to give up the play, and maybe you'll be able to find another manager to produce it."

"Which will mean that he'll have to engage you. I have written the drama for you, and no other actress shall, with my consent, play Sue Starbeam."

"Of course not! I regard the part as my own."

Arthur went off to see Josh about their return to Chicago.

"Well, what did I tell you, son?" said the old man. "I felt it in my bones that matters would come to this. These cheap managers are all tarred with the same brush. If actors weren't such easy marks the tribe of Hendersons would be largely diminished. Take it from me, that badly as Henderson has treated his people, most of them would sign with him to-morrow for another tour if he sent for them and put up a game of talk."

"Why would they?"

"Because there are too many cheap actors in the business. They've got to live, and the only way they can do that is to work. There isn't half enough work for all, so every mother's son of them, and daughter, as well, is willing to take a chance even on the manager who has already skinned them two or three times before."

"You ought to know, pop, but it seems queer to me."

"If you stick to the profession, which I hope you won't, you'll cut your eye-teeth after a while. Some actors talk big, but they always cave in when it comes to the test. Of course, son, you understand I'm not talking about actors with real talent, who can secure engagements with reputable managers and make good. These people make good money, but they have their bumps, too. I have known good people to rehearse five or six weeks in some piece that was to go out for the season, during which time they got no money, and then when the show struck the provinces it failed to draw worth a cent, and the tour was abandoned, the company being brought back and discharged. Thus, for seven or eight weeks' work the people only got two or three weeks' salary, and the only thing they could do was to grin and bear it."

"That's tough."

"The world seems to be made up of tough things. It is only the favored few who bask on the velvet side of it. It's been seamy enough with me son, and I don't know that I shall kick when I have to quit it."

Arthur then told Josh how his play had been submitted to Henderson the morning before, and that he had carried it off with him.

"To bad, son. I really believe your drama had some good points in it. I reckon you've got talent that way. I'm afraid you'll never see it again. If Henderson should think well of it, he'll use it without asking your permission, and nary a cent of royalty would you get out of him, even if you sued him."

"I could stop him by an injunction, couldn't I?"

"Sure you could, but then all he need do would be to skip on into the next State, and your injunction would be of no use to you. You'd have to follow him from State to State, getting out injunctions. If you could do that, why, by and by there would be no States left for him to go to."

and then you'd win; but think what it would cost you."

Happily for the present-day dramatist this expensive procedure has been done away with, and to-day one injunction holds good in all States, consequently the only chance the dishonest manager now has to produce a stolen or pirated play, worth the venture, is to change the name and otherwise disguise his prize so that the owner cannot easily recognize or trace his property.

"What I've got to do is to get back to Chicago and take my play away from him," said Arthur.

"If you strike him for it before he has gone over it, or if it doesn't hit his fancy, you'll get it back, in all probability; otherwise you'll find that possession is nine points of the law with a man of his stamp."

After the departure of Harlow, Jinks et al., the rest of the company made a pool and secured tickets for Chicago. They all took the night train for the Windy City, and thus ended the career of Henderson's All-Star Uncle Tom Combination.

CHAPTER IX.—The Old Actor.

On their arrival in Chicago, Mrs. Rand, Ruby, Josh and Arthur went to the same theatrical boarding house. Where the others went does not concern this story. The four did not have any superabundance of money left after their trunks were landed in their rooms and they had paid a week's board in advance. Mrs. Rand, and Josh hied themselves at once to a dramatic agency and entered their names on the agent's book. The actress also entered Ruby for second soubrette roles, with singing and dancing accomplishments. The agent told Josh he could place him at once.

"John Haley is about to open the Criterion," he said, "and wants a good stage carpenter and property man. As I know you can fill the bill, I'll give you a note to him and the job will be yours."

"I'll take it. What does it pay?"

The agent mentioned the salary, which was quite satisfactory to Josh, and he departed in great satisfaction for the theater. He saw Manager Haley at his office in the Monroe Building and was hired at once.

"I'm not ready for your services yet, Davis, as I haven't decided on the attraction I intend to open with," said Haley. "I am at present figuring on whether to put on a stock company for the summer, or import one of the New York musical successes still running in that city, if I can arrange for it. I am going on to New York in a day or so to look the field over and see what I can do. You will hear from me when I get back. You can go over to the theater and look around if you want. I will give you a note to the doorkeeper."

Josh took the note and left. He found the theater first class in every respect, with a seating capacity of about 1,200. Josh returned to the boarding house in time to sit down to lunch. In the meantime Arthur and Ruby made the rounds of the cheap theatrical agencies to try and find out Henderson's address. Gus Thacker's was the last place they visited, and there they learned that Henderson made his headquarters at that place.

He had dropped in there that morning merely to let Thacker know he was in town. The agent said that he had incidentally told him he was going out with a repertoire company in the course of a month.

"He told me he has a peach of a little star, and that he expects to cut it fat on his next trip," said Thacker, looking hard at the girl.

"I'm the star he had reference to," said Ruby.

"Indeed! Do you know, I thought as much, or I wouldn't have let out so much. He didn't mention your name. These managers are awfully close," laughed Thacker. "Now that you have called, I suppose you will let me know who you are?"

"Mr. Henderson might object, you know," said Ruby slyly.

"Pshaw! Let him object. What's the difference? You intend to sign with him, I suppose. He gave me to understand that the matter was as good as settled between your mother and him."

"Until we have signed, I think I'd better keep my identity to myself."

Thacker looked disappointed.

"Oh, all right. Please yourself," he said. "Do you want to make an appointment with him here?"

"Yes."

"Very well. What time will you call?"

"Will he be here in the morning at eleven?"

"I can't say, but he might. If you won't give me your name, how can I tell him who wants to see him?"

"Oh, you can say Miss Ruby. He will understand."

"Ruby. That's a sweet name, almost as sweet as yourself."

"I'm sorry I can't return the compliment," replied Ruby, with a mischievous look.

"Oh, I say, that's hard on me," said Thacker, fondling his short mustache.

He was a dapper-looking young man, a bit pockmarked, smoothly shaven and sallow. He wore a heavy rolled gold chain across his checked vest, a Brazilian diamond in the ring on his little finger, and another larger one in his brilliant-hued scarf. He had an idea that he produced a stunning effect, but his personality made no impression on the little actress.

"Do you think so? How sad!" answered the young lady, a bit coquettishly.

"Yes, it is sad the way you girls put it over us fellows. Do you know, I'm quite mashed on you. Half a dozen or more dames blow in here every day looking for work, but none of them are quite up to you."

"Really! You flatter me."

"I think we'd better go," suggested Arthur, who didn't fancy the agent's familiar way. "It's close on to lunch time."

"Are you a member of the profession, young man?" asked Thacker.

"I was out with Mr. Henderson for a few weeks as long as he stayed out, but I was merely assistant property man," replied Arthur.

Thacker grinned.

"Yes, I guess we must go," said Ruby, getting up.

"Oh, don't tear yourself away, girlie. I would not mind standing the lunch if you would honor me with your company."

"Aren't you kind! Sorry, but I can't accept. Come on, Arthur," and out they sailed and returned to the boarding house.

Josh told his foster-son that he had connected with the Criterion Theater as stage carpenter and master of props.

"That's fine!" said Arthur. "You won't have to travel now, and you'll get your money sure."

"Yes. Haley is a responsible theatrical man. I'll try and get you on there in some capacity. So you and Miss Rand were out looking for Henderson? What luck?"

Arthur gave him the substance of Ruby's interview with Agent Thacker.

"You two are going there again to-morrow, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"I hope you'll get your play back. Haley has not decided whether he will put a summer stock company in the Criterion, or get an attraction, company and all, from New York. He's going there to see about it. If he should happen to fall back on the stock plan, he might give your play a hearing. He seems to be a nice man. If he was willing to consider it, it would pay you to let him use it for nothing. It would give you a start."

"I'd do that if he would take Ruby on in the play."

"Probably he would. The girl has undoubted ability. She can sing like a bird, and dance like a house afire. I suppose she would introduce both in your drama?"

"Sure. She intends to make a hit."

The lunch bell called them downstairs, where they met a bunch of brother and sister professionals, most of them out of work. They seemed to be a happy lot, though their united capital would hardly have been enough to start a bank. Ruby attracted considerable attention at the table by her fresh, girlish beauty, but she was easily recognized as a professional by those who had not already met her and her mother. The conversation was principally "shop."

There were perhaps eighteen boarders at that time at the house, and the one that chiefly interested Arthur was an elderly actor, run to seed. He was fond of remarking that he had played with Edwin Forrest, and other fine old-time actors, and the boy wondered who he was. He asked Josh, who sat beside him.

"Oh, that's McKean Ranter, an old-timer. He'd be in the workhouse if it wasn't that he receives a small monthly income from a trust fund."

"He appears to have been an actor of some importance in his time."

"He thinks he was."

"Thinks he was! What do you mean by that?"

"He's talked so much about the parts he says he played that I guess he believes now he really played them."

"Come now, pop, aren't you a little hard on him? He seems to be quite a respectable and dignified old man, though rather shabby in his attire. He wouldn't say that he played with Edwin Forrest, Booth, Charlotte Cushman, and others of the same line if he hadn't done so."

"Oh, he played with them, I guess, but only in subordinate parts. He talks as if he had supported them. I've known him for years and he never produced a bill yet with his name on it."

"He probably did not make a collection of the programs. The fact that he hasn't one now is no evidence against him."

"That's true, son; but I've talked with professionals who have his number, and they told me that he was only a very ordinary actor in his prime."

"He uses many curious expressions."

"They're a habit with him. He's a noted figure on the Chicago rialto—that is, noted for his eccentricities."

Lunch over, Arthur started out alone. On the stoop he met McKean Ranter sunning himself in a dignified attitude.

"Odds bodkins, young man! I believe the landlady failed to do the honors between us. Prythee, what is thy name? You look like young Norval—he who, on the Grampian hills, fed his father's flocks. Once I played the part, and if my recollection rightly serves me, I was the talk of the town. But thy name?"

"Arthur Burton," replied the boy.

"You do light comedy—the lover's parts, eh? Ah! youth, youth, what a—"

Arthur cut his rhapsody short by saying he was not an actor.

"Not an actor! By my halidom! You surprise me. You have the face of Booth. I played with him in my palmy days. Shall we adjourn to the corner and over a glass of vulgar lager have a chat? I will relate some of my early triumphs when I—"

"You'll have to excuse me, Mr. Ranter. I don't drink."

"Don't drink!"

The old man looked at him as if he were a new kind of animal he had never met before.

"Did I understand you correctly—that you—don't drink?" he said.

"Yes, sir."

"List to that, ye wild winds, and still your howling music! You don't drink. Ah, I see; you mean you haven't the price! Ah, 'tis a pity, and pity 'tis, 'tis true, that I, too, am suffering from a lack of the coin of the realm. Perhaps you could borrow a dime somewhere. My credit, alas! that I should have to confess it, is at a low ebb. I have a thirst, and would quaff the nectar of Gambrinus, if I possessed but a humble nickel."

"I can oblige you with that," said Arthur, anxious to get away.

"You have saved my life, young sir, and I thank thee," said the old actor, taking the boy by the arm and leading him toward the corner.

"I beg your pardon, but I'm going the other way. Here's the nickel."

Ranter's fingers closed convulsively over the coin, and before he could say another word Arthur was off.

CHAPTER X.—How Arthur Recovered His Play.

"Hello, Burton, how goes it?"

The words, accompanied by a slap on the back, arrested Arthur's steps and attention an hour later as he was walking down the block in which Gus Thacker's theatrical agency was situated. He was not in that vicinity because he had any intention of calling on the agent, but because he just happened to come that way. He turned

around and faced Fred Jinks, the low comedian, who had played the character of Marks with Henderson en tour.

"How do you do, Mr. Jinks!" said Arthur, shaking hands with him.

"I do as I please at present, for I haven't got on familiar terms with work yet. Thanks to that old scoundrel, Henderson, I am nearly strapped. I saw him just now going into Gus Thacker's. He had a roll of paper in his hands that looked suspiciously like a play. I suppose the villain is hiring a new company to do the provinces. If he does them as well as he does his people he'll—but where are you putting up?"

"At Mrs. O'Reilly's boarding house, on — street. Mrs. Rand and Ruby are there. And pop, of course. They'll be glad to see you if you will call."

"I'll be around to-night after supper. I know the house. I stopped there once but owing to a sudden contraction of finances I had to leave by the back window one night, and the old dragon froze onto my trunk. But bless you, I expected that and all I left in it were a couple of bricks which I picked up at a new building," and Jinks laughed at the recollection.

"I shouldn't think you'd care to meet Mrs. O'Reilly again."

"Oh, I don't entertain any hard feelings toward her," grinned the low comedian.

"You say you just saw Mr. Henderson go into Thacker's agency?"

"Yes. I struck him for the week and a half's pay he owes me. He said he was flat broke, but that's all tommyrot. He has a little pocket in the corner of his coat, where he soaks away the dollars. Oh, it's hard to get his goat!"

"He's got something belonging to me. I'll run down there and ask him for it," said Arthur.

"If it's worth anything, you'd better take a club, or the chances are you won't get it. Henderson has fingers like pothooks. He hangs on to everything he gets hold of."

"He didn't hang on to the money he made at Glendale and Dexter."

"No, but that wasn't his fault. Well, so-long. I'll be over to the O'Reilly establishment some time this evening, so you people can look out for me."

Thus speaking, the comedian walked away, swinging his rattan cane, while Arthur proceeded to the Thacker agency. The office was on the third floor at the back, in a shabby-looking building where rents were cheap. A door with a frosted glass panel, on which Mr. Thacker's name and business were set forth in black letters admitted Arthur to the outer or reception room. Usually, during business hours, a small, red-headed boy sat at a cheap desk in a corner, asked the visitor's business, and took his card, or his name, in to Mr. Thacker, if that individual was in his private room beyond.

If he was out, the caller was at liberty to sit down and amuse himself with the well-thumbed dramatic papers and magazines which littered the center table, together with an ancient copy of the Official Theatrical Guide. On the walls were a number of framed footlight celebrities, as well as several who were as yet comparatively unknown to fame. The red-headed boy happened to be out on an errand when Arthur walked in, and

there were no visitors awaiting an audience with the agent, consequently the reception room was empty.

The door of the private room stood slightly ajar, and through the opening Arthur recognized Henderson's voice quite plainly, as well as that of the agent's. Arthur decided that it would be both impolitic as well as impolite to break in on the two men, who were doubtless discussing business, so he sat down to wait till the manager came out. The premises being quiet, every word came to Arthur's ears.

"She'll be here in the morning at eleven o'clock," said Thacker. "You want to be on hand. If I were you, I'd lose no time in signing her if she's got half the ability you say she has. She's a beaut as far as looks go, and her style is quite breezy. Freeze on to her before some other manager picks her up."

"I intend to. I'll make out the contract in duplicate when I get back to my room. I'm going to offer her forty per and her mother twenty, pay their own."

"Forty per—haps, eh?" laughed Thacker.

"No. I expect she'll pull a house right along, and that the ghost will walk regularly. I've got just the play for her. And the funny part of it is she recommended it herself."

"What is it? Something she's seen at one of the big houses?"

"Not at all. It's original, and was written expressly for her by a young chap I had out with me on my late tour. He seems to be stuck on her."

"You mean the young fellow who came here with her this morning?"

"If his name was Arthur Burton, I mean him."

"I don't know what his name was. She didn't introduce him. He said he was out with you as assistant property man."

"That was him, then."

"He's a fine-looking young fellow. I took him for an actor. So he wrote the play you are talking about?"

"She says he did, and her word is good enough for me."

"And it's a good one?"

"Bang up. I didn't take to it when she offered it to me. I have no faith in amateur playwrights, but this chap seems to be a genius. The play is really a find. It's better than nine-tenths of the plays that are taken out on the road every year by second-grade writers like—" here Henderson mentioned the names of several popular writers of cheap melodramas that had made successes at third-rate combination houses in the large cities, as well as on the road. "It fits Miss Rand like the paper on the wall. I fancy she's had a hand in the construction of it, but the actual writing, I guess, is his, all right. He probably got some help, too, from his father, who is a first class stage carpenter and property man. Of course, I'll sign him and his father. He can play small parts and help with the baggage as before, but as for paying him anything for the play—"

"You couldn't think of it," laughed Thacker.

"I'll put his name on the bills as the author. That ought to satisfy him. Why, I'm doing him a favor to put it on! Some managers would want

to be paid for that. I think he ought to be grateful to me, don't you, Thacker?"

"Surest thing you know. What kind of a play is it?"

"A sort of comedy-drama, with several thrills."

"How many acts?"

"Five."

"Phew! How about the scenery?"

"Easy. Only two cloths needed and two set-pieces, which are not difficult. One is a lower section of a lighthouse, the other a cottage exterior."

"That's first rate. The young fellow showed judgment and skill, I should say."

"I guess he figured it all out first with his old man. Josh Davis has had a heap of experience in stage setting, and he steered the boy clear of what wouldn't go. There's a diagram for each of the three scenes that makes everything clear. I'll show you. I brought the manuscript with me to let you see what the play is like."

The conversation became indistinct for a while as the two men conned the first sheets of the play.

"I've just come from Ridley's warehouse. He's got a sea backing that was used in 'The Bell Buoy,' and is in prime condition. His artist will paint in the perspective lighthouse and reef. He's also got a cottage interior that will do first rate, with a little freshening up and a few objects painted in to make it look nautical. I can get 'em cheap. He's got a stack of set cottages. The only new thing I'll need is the lighthouse, and that won't cost much."

"Now, how many people are you going to carry, leaving out the author and Davis? There's a cast of twelve, but I dare say two or three can be doubled. At any rate, the boy is good for one of the minor parts, and you can run Davis in as a sailor."

"As soon as I sign the girl and her mother I'll give you a list. I'll only want two other women. Got a soubrette on your books—one that's not too good?"

"I've half a dozen. The chief male I see is a juvenile lead. I've got the man you want. Thirty per. I'll talk him into paying his own. He's a good B-flat cornetist. The gents are expected to double in brass, I suppose?"

"Of course. I shall only route the small towns till I see how the play takes."

"Only going to take one piece?"

"I'm considering a Western melodrama in four acts that's been out. The scenery is stored at Ridley's, and is for sale cheap."

"I'll take it if it has a star part for you, young lady."

"It has. Well, I must get to my room and fill out the two contracts. I'll be on hand to-morrow. Good afternoon."

"Ta-ta! I wish you luck."

Arthur, having heard all that passed in the private office, began to think he was likely to have some difficulty in getting his play back. While these thoughts were flitting across the young dramatist's mind, Henderson came to the door and then turned around to say something to Thacker. He stood half in and half out of the door and a couple of feet from where the boy sat. Sticking out of his side pocket was the play. On the spur of the moment, Arthur reached out

his hand and drew it from his pocket, then prepared for a verbal scrap.

Henderson, however, didn't notice the abstraction, and moved back into the private room. Arthur saw his chance and glided toward the outer door. It was opened in his face by the red-headed boy. The young dramatist brushed hastily past him, ran downstairs to the street, and hurried to the boarding house, where he exhibited his property in triumph to Ruby, and then explained all that had taken place in Thacker's office.

CHAPTER XI.—On the Eve of—What?

Manager Haley of the Criterion spent a week in New York and returned to Chicago without doing any business. On the morning after his arrival he met Josh and Arthur on the street.

"This is my foster-son, Arthur Burton," said the old man.

"Happy to know you," said Haley, offering his hand.

"I want you to place him if you can at the theater."

"Is he a capable actor? I've decided on a stock company for the summer."

"Have you?" said Josh. "Then I wish you'd look a play over that Arthur has written for one of the smartest little soubrettes in the city. You can get her for the drama, and I tell you she's a hummer. She'll knock 'em cold. Whether you use the play or not, you'll want Miss Rand after you see what she can do."

"I've brought a bunch of plays with me from New York, but I'll look your son's piece over if he'll bring it to my office this afternoon at three. I can tell in a few minutes whether I can use it or not. If it's got the stuff, I'll take a chance on it, for I have a liking for new material that looks promising."

"I'll bring it to you, Mr. Haley," said Arthur eagerly. "Another manager wanted to put it on the road, but he isn't the kind of man I care to do business with. He was quite stuck on it, because he said it was the goods and easy to put on. If you don't mind, I'd like to bring Miss Rand with me."

"Bring her along," said Haley. "What is her line?"

"Singing and dancing soubrette. If you take her, you might give her mother a chance. She's a capable actress for responsible old women."

Haley laughed.

"Got any more to recommend? You'll save me the trouble of going to an agent."

"No. Only those two."

Josh and Arthur then continued their work. Promptly at three Arthur and Ruby entered Manager Haley's office. In about twenty minutes he called them into his private den.

"Mr. Haley, this is Miss Ruby Rand," said Arthur.

"Happy to know you, Miss Rand. You have been strongly recommended to me by this young man and Josh Davis," said Haley, greatly struck by the girl's beauty and chic appearance, "but as your standing in the profession is unknown to me I shall require some evidence of ability on your part before I can talk business with you."

"If you'll give her a try-out she'll make good, Mr. Haley," said Arthur. "I've seen her act Topsy, and I assure you she was the whole show. She is pretty well up in Sue Starbeam, the leading part of my drama, so she'll be able to show you what she can do in it."

"You brought the play?"

"Here it is," and Arthur handed him the manuscript.

Haley looked at the title and saw it was in five acts. He glanced over the cast and then read the synopsis carefully. The scene plot he regarded with favor, backed up as it was with the diagrams. There he stopped.

"Well, young man, I rather like the piece as far as I've gone into it. I'll take the manuscript home with me and read it to-night if nothing prevents."

"Thank you, sir."

"Now, Miss Rand, let me have your address. I will send for you to come to the theater in a day or two. I will have a musician to try your voice, and then I will see what your capabilities as an actress are. That is all."

The young people got up and left. On the following day Arthur received a note from Haley, telling him to call at his office that afternoon at three. The boy was on hand, as a matter of course.

"Burton," said Manager Haley, "I have read your play and like it. If this is your first attempt, you seem to have mastered the business at the start. While it is true that the dialogue is crude in spots, and the play, as a whole, is far from what an experienced writer would be expected to turn out, still its construction and dramatic possibilities are as good as anything I have ever seen in its way. I like the way you have treated your material. The lights and shadows are about perfect, in my opinion. Pathos and humor are fittingly contrasted. You have made Sue Starbeam a star part. I have a character soubrette in mind who can do the part. If I can get her on short notice, I'll open the Criterion with your play."

"Won't you give Miss Rand a hearing? She will come up to your expectations. I wrote the piece largely under her guidance. She is interested in the part of Sue and will do it justice. She is already stage perfect in it, and quite prepared to show you what she can do. You will make no mistake in giving her a chance. Indeed, both of us will be greatly disappointed if you don't," replied Arthur earnestly.

"Bring her to the theater to-morrow morning at eleven. And now as to pay for the use of your piece. I think you may regard the advantage of a city hearing for your first effort as sufficient remuneration. Most unknown authors would, I have no doubt. However, I will compromise the matter so far as to promise you a compensation of five per cent. on the gross receipts after the first week if I keep the piece on. That will give you something if your play scores a moderate success."

"I accept the arrangement," said the young dramatist.

"Very well. I'll give you a memorandum to that effect so there need be no misunderstanding about the matter."

Haley dashed off the agreement and handed it

to the boy. Arthur then left. When he returned to the boarding house for lunch with Josh he reported to Ruby that his play had been accepted. Next morning Arthur took Ruby to the theater. The manager and another man were on hand waiting for them.

"We will try your voice first, Miss Rand, as I want to see what you can do in that line. Did you bring any music?" asked Manager Haley.

"Here are the two songs I expect to sing if I play the part of Sue, and here is the dance music to be introduced in Act III," replied the little actress.

"Very well," said the manager, taking the scores. "Here, Mr. Smith," and he handed them to the other man, who stepped to the piano in the orchestra and opened it.

"I think you would get a better idea of the first song if you let me lead up to it," said Ruby.

"Very well, Miss Rand; do so. It will give me a line on your style," said Haley.

"All right, Miss Rand," said Mr. Smith, who then picked up that piece and ran over the notes in a preliminary way.

When he stopped, Haley nodded to the girl. In the scene she proposed to enact it had been arranged between her and Arthur that he was to second her in the part of Jude Starbeam, her rascally, alleged father.

"Sue enters left upper entrance to music," said Arthur to Mr. Smith, as Ruby walked up to that corner of the bare stage, at a point where she would be out of sight of the audience when the stage was set. "Will you run off something in that line?"

The gentleman was perfectly familiar with entrance music. He began the entre low and gradually rising. Before stirring, Ruby uttered a rippling girlish laugh that echoed up to the flies, and then, as the music grew to the right pitch, she came bounding on and stopped. Looking at Arthur, who stood up right of center, she uttered a mischievous but short laugh.

"Why, dad, what are you doing with that old box?" she said, her opening words of the play.

"Nothin'," replied Arthur, making a movement to conceal the imaginary box, which contained the secret of the girl's identity, under his jacket. "Nothin', Sue. Go in the house and don't bother me. You're alwus tearin' 'round like a young colt arter its mother. Go on now and start dinner. I've got to go over to the light to clean the lamps."

But Sue Starbeam wouldn't go in and get dinner. She was curious about the old water-soaked box and its contents, and she had a glimmering idea that the faded, yellow letters she had more than once seen in her presumed father's hands had some relation to her. When the scene ended with her song, Haley clapped his hands, and so did Mr. Smith.

"You'll do, Miss Rand," said the manager. "I never saw anything better done. If I had any doubt about using the play, I'd put it on just to bring you out. You sing like a bird. Now give us a specimen of your dancing."

Mr. Smith ran over the preliminary notes of the dance music and then Ruby showed what she could do in that line. Haley was satisfied he had got hold of an attraction that was going to take—at any rate, in "Shore Folks"—and he lost

no time in making terms with Ruby and her mother. In a few days the daily papers of Chicago, which had announced the fact that John Haley was going to open the Criterion Theater for the summer season, printed the following advertisement in their amusement column:

"Criterion, South Monroe street. John Haley, manager. Will open Monday evening, May 28, with the brilliant young soubrette, Miss Ruby Rand in the comedy-drama of 'Shore Folks.' Matinees, Tuesdays, Thursdays and Saturdays. Popular prices—\$1.50, \$1.25, 50c., 25c."

That week of preparation and rehearsal was a busy one for all hands connected with the theater, and it was peculiarly exciting and anticipatory to the young dramatic author, as well as the little actress who was to make her first appearance before a metropolitan audience and the Chicago dramatic critics. To say the truth, Arthur was even more interested in Ruby's success than in his first play, while the case was reversed with Ruby.

The thoughts of each were so engrossed with what they fully believed was to be their dual triumph that they forgot all about the dark-featured man, whom they had not heard from since that Sunday afternoon in Summerdale. But Ruby's enemy had not forgotten her.

CHAPTER XII.—The Success of a Young Dramatist.

The Criterion Theater opened at what might be considered the tail-end of the regular dramatic season in Chicago. The venture was avowedly intended as a summer speculation. The theater, however, was a first-class one, and John Haley was known as a first-class manager. Haley, we may say, had been struck by the possibilities of the part of Sue Starbeam in the hands of a clever artiste, and when he read the play he had a certain well-known soubrette in mind whom he believed he could get. Her salary was \$300 a week, but she was worth every dollar of it.

When Arthur suggested Ruby for the part of Sue, Haley consented to give her a try-out largely to oblige the young dramatist, who he saw was intensely interested in Miss Rand, but without any expectation of employing the girl. Haley recognized dramatic ability right off the reel. He was both surprised and delighted at the exhibition Ruby gave off-hand, as it were, and decided then and there, as we have seen, that she should play Sue. Incidentally, he saved a bunch of money, for Ruby and her mother signed, collectively, for \$100 per week.

Haley knew he would have most of the dramatic writers at his first night, for there was nothing else to engage their attention. In order to insure a good house downstairs, he instructed his advertising man to be liberal in the distribution of passes good only for that night. Many more tickets were circulated otherwise. Although there is no money in this sort of thing, it has its advantages from a managerial point of view. If the play happens to be a good one, the people who see it for nothing will speak well of it to their friends, just as those who have to pay are

likely to do. If anything in the world needs good advertising it's a play, no matter what its intrinsic value is. Monday night came—the evening that meant so much for Arthur and Ruby. And Fate was busier with their destinies than either of them dreamed.

The dark-featured man had not been idle. He had spotted Ruby's boarding house, but found no chance to safely get in his foul work. He had followed Ruby, her mother and sometimes Arthur, to and from the theater when they attended rehearsals, but something always prevented him from acting. At last a brilliant scheme suggested itself to him, and he proceeded to put it into effect.

After seven o'clock on Monday the public began to gravitate toward the Criterion Theater, but how many exchanged pieces of cardboard for seats, or how many paid real money, only the treasurer knew, and the manager later. Among those who went in was the dark-featured man, and he paid a dollar and a half for an orchestra seat well down front. He carried in his hand an elaborate bouquet, and those who saw it judged he was a friend of the star. The curtain was to rise at 8.15 and at about eight the orchestra of ten pieces started the overture. The stage manager was bustling around to see that everything was ready. Arthur, who had been advanced to the responsible position of prompter, which carried with it more duties than the name implies, being, in fact, the assistant to the stage manager, moved between a little wall desk on the right-hand side of the proscenium arch, where were the handles of the curtain and other signals to the region above the flies, as well as the mouth-pieces of several speaking tubes.

The electrician was at his post, so was the curtain man, and, in fact, everybody. Josh himself was inspecting the bolts that held the supports of the set cottage, the set tree, and other detachable adjuncts to the first act. The members of the cast were either in their dressing rooms putting on the finishing touches, or somewhere about the stage. As the scene took up the full extent of the stage, the cloth backing, a seascape, being against the brick wall, those concerned in the act had to see to it that they were on their entrance side when the curtain went up. The orchestra finished the overture.

"Clear the stage! Get to your places!" shouted the stage manager, in a low but effective tone.

There was a scurrying of some of the actors. The heavy man, who enacted Jude Starbeam, took his place up center with a telescope to look off with. Sam Singer, played by the chief low comedian, came on with a jack-knife and a piece of wood, for he was to be discovered whitling, seated on an inverted lobster pot, which, by the way, is not a pot at all, but a wicker contrivance for catching lobsters.

The comedian and the heavy man opened the play. The stage manager walked over to the prompter's desk and pulled the brass handle of the curtain signal down once. That was to notify the man at the winch in the gallery above to get ready. Then he blew through a tube communicating with the orchestra leader's desk. The leader heard the low squeaks and tapped his music stand. In another moment the curtain rolled up to lively music and a full house. The new

play was on, and it proceeded smoothly up to the moment when Ruby's laugh sounded L. U. E.

The entrance music was suggestive of the coming of the star, and the laugh made that fact certain. It was so natural and infectious that even before Ruby rushed on the applause began. It was the laugh of a born artiste. Unknown to dramatic fame, the girl caught the audience and established herself as a metropolitan favorite that moment. Thence on it was Sue Starbeam and nothing else, and the young creator of Sue Starbeam stood in one of the right-hand entrances and watched the girl of his heart with glistening eyes and bated breath. Once or twice during the progress of the first act the dark-featured man clutched the bouquet and half rose in his seat, but fell back each time. The act finally ended and Ruby was called before the curtain.

Then it was, with a terrible look, the dark-featured man started to get up in earnest. Little did the smiling girl on the stage near the foot-lights dream that Death was at that moment flapping his sable wings above her fair head. And yet she was saved by a simple thing. The man's coat-tail caught somehow in the arm of his folding chair. With a muttered imprecation he turned to extricate it. It took him a quarter of a minute, but in that time his opportunity had passed. He sat down with an ugly look as Ruby vanished behind the curtain.

The newspaper men gathered in the foyer and discussed Ruby Rand. One or two remarked that the play had begun well, and seemed the product of a clever writer. The second act went fine and gave all the critics a good impression of the play.

The dark-featured man never moved during it, for at no time was the girl well separated from the others on the stage. The third act still further added to the interest in the play and boosted Ruby higher as an artiste. It was in this act Ruby did her dance. The dark-featured man recognized his chance and prepared for it, but at the critical moment, when the house was applauding the little actress, the man, a drummer, who occupied the next seat, so far forgot himself in his enthusiasm as to grip the stranger tightly by the right arm.

"Fine and dandy, isn't it? Why don't you throw her that bouquet?" cried the speaker, forgetting that he was preventing the man from doing it, and so the dark man lost another great chance, and he swore softly through his teeth.

The fourth act was on. It was the lighthouse scene, the climax of the play. It had been cleverly worked up, and the audience felt that something was going to happen. Yes, something was about to happen, but not what the audience was looking for. In this act both hero and Sue Starbeam were in trouble. The girl comes to the reef, where she has learned her lover is imprisoned in the lighthouse, to rescue him. She is caught by her reputed father, Jude, and tied up, but she escapes and is pursued. In the midst of the excitement she occupies the center of the stage, well front, all by herself. The interest of the audience was centered in the heroine, and they were applauding the neat way she had just tricked her pursuers, when a bouquet, thrown by the dark-featured man, circled through the air and struck the stage at Ruby's feet. Instantly black smoke issued from among the flowers.

Ruby stared at it in a frightened way. Arthur standing in the wings, understood the situation. Seizing a bucket of water, he rushed upon the stage.

"Run, Ruby—it's a bomb!" he cried.

With a shriek, the girl turned and ran, while the audience rose in a panic. In the excitement which ensued the dark-featured man started for the door. The aisle was congested by frightened people and he couldn't make progress. Arthur seized the bouquet, at the risk of his life, and jabbed it into the water. Turning quickly toward the audience he shouted:

"Stop that man—the fellow with the Vandyke beard—stop him!"

He was already stopped. The drummer who had been seated beside him had seen his act, and, with presence of mind, followed and grabbed him. Arthur saw that the danger was over and announced the fact to the audience. The orchestra started up and the panic was nipped in the bud. Leaving the pail where it was, Arthur leaped from the stage and made for the author of the near-tragedy.

"You scoundrel! I've got you at last! You shall pay dearly for this. I know you, Edward Forrester. This marks your finish."

The rascal was soon in the hands of the police, who took away the bouquet in the pail and discovered that it actually concealed a bomb powerful enough to have done terrible damage on the stage. It was some time before the play could go on. Arthur was called for by everybody and he came out and received a tremendous ovation. This was prolonged when Ruby, coming to the front, said:

"This is Arthur Burton. He is the author of this play. He has saved my life."

Next morning's papers were full of the bomb incident, and of the new soubrette who had appeared above the dramatic horizon, and of the play; but more about the author, whose presence of mind and pluck had averted a great catastrophe and prevented a disastrous panic. Needless to say, after that the Criterion Theater was crowded nightly to see both play and actress, and for several weeks the S. R. O. sign was displayed in the entrance before eight o'clock.

Night after night, Arthur got a curtain call at the end of the fourth act, as a tribute not only to his budding talent, but to his courage at a moment of peril. Edward Forrester killed himself in jail, and then the story came out that Ruby Rand was the orphan daughter of a wealthy family, whose rights had been usurped by Edward Forrester, a poor cousin, once an actor and company-mate of Mrs. Rand. And so Ruby came into a fortune, but she would not give up the stage as long as "Shore Folks", Arthur's first success, held the boards throughout the country.

The young dramatist made a bunch of money out of it, and at the close of its final run he married the little actress who had opened to him the way to fame.

Next week's issue will contain "IN THE MONEY GAME; or THE LUCK OF TWO WALL STREET CHUMS"

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—OR—

FIGHTING AGAINST A FRAUD

By GASTON GARNE

(A Serial Story)

CHAPTER XXIV.

The Nineteen-Year-Old Lawyer Exposes the Fraud and Wins His Case.

"Now, gentlemen of the jury," said Lew, "I want you to look well at those two men, standing side by side, as they have testified that they both stood at the time of this alleged accident. Look well at them, for in a short time you will see photographs of them, and I want you to be able to recognize them."

Sniffen began to look puzzled, and when the two men had sat down again Lew turned to the jury.

"Gentlemen," he said, "on the very day that this alleged accident happened some people who are engaged in the business of making moving pictures were at work on one that included a Black Hand scene, with the explosion of a bomb and the apparent destruction of property and loss of life. It happened that they had selected the very corner where this alleged accident was to come off at the time appointed by the conspirators for carrying out the first steps in their fraud, and an empty store had been fixed up to represent an Italian grocery, and everything put in readiness for a most realistic scene."

"The man who made the picture for this Black Hand scene is here in court and will testify that he made it on the very day and at the very hour when Mrs. Winslow obligingly dropped off the rear platform of the car and permitted herself to be dragged for a few feet, with a good, tight hold to prevent any real injury. I will ask the judge to permit the maker of the scene to attach his wires to the electric current in this court, to darken the room and exhibit the picture, and then you will see that the car didn't really stop, that the conductor really didn't pull the bell and start the car up again as the plaintiff was alighting, but that Mrs. Winslow jumped from the car while it was in motion, and that Luby and Dupree were running away from the corner where they had been planted as witnesses, and didn't see her get off."

Then Lew asked the judge for permission to make the necessary connection and have the room darkened for the exhibition of the Black Hand scene.

"I will prove by it, your Honor," announced Lew, "that Luby and Dupree, who knew nothing of the preparations for the taking of this picture, were standing on the corner waiting for Mrs. Winslow to have her accident, according to

the plan laid out, were frightened by the harmless bomb that was exploded, and when the moving picture employees ran away with every indication of fear from the vicinity of the sham Italian grocery, these men were seized with fright and ran with the rest."

The electrician very quickly made his connections, the room was darkened sufficiently, and then the scene was thrown upon a sheet that was erected at the rear of the big room. Judge, jury and spectators watched it with intense interest. The instant that the scene was thrown on the sheet the conspicuous and easily recognizable form and faces of Luby and Dupree were marked by the silent crowd, and some voices were heard to say softly, but distinctly: "There they are!"

The judge rapped with his gavel, and in perfect silence the balance of the scene was displayed, proving every portion of the statement made by the young lawyer, and showing conclusively that Mrs. Winslow jumped from the car while it was in motion, and that Luby and Durpree had started to run away from the corner before she jumped from the car and could not possibly have seen her leave the platform.

The scene ended, the lights were turned up, and then Sniffen got upon his feet and addressed the court. He said that he could see that he had been imposed upon, that the case was evidently fraudulent, and that as his reputation was at stake he asked permission of the court to withdraw from the case.

Lew had no proofs against Sniffen to support his belief that the lawyer was a party to the conspiracy, so he could not say anything, and the judge at once granted the request.

Then Lew addressed the court, and asked that the plaintiff and her witnesses be taken into custody, as he would charge them with conspiracy to defraud, and at a nod from the judge officers of the court put them under arrest.

Lew then addressed the judge:

"Your honor, after Mr. Scribner was injured and the conduct of this case fell into my hands, for some reason the parties connected with this conspiracy seemed to fear me more than they had feared my employer, and with the idea of getting me out of the way until this matter had been tried and settled they lured me into two traps and made me a prisoner, but I fortunately managed to make my escape. On one of these occasions I had a fight in a dark room with two men, one of whom is undoubtedly the 'brains,' as it is termed, of the gang that was opposed to me, and a subsequent search of the room in which I successfully found for my liberty resulted in placing in my hands two clues, which I now propose to make use of, one being a short, dark, curling beard that was worn by the man who did the talking, which, I may as well say, was a proposition to me to sell out my client for a thousand dollars, and the other was a section of a bloodstone cameo, which I have reason to believe was broken when I swung a chair in the darkness and hit it. I now ask that the court direct the officers to hold the man I will point out, while I restore the beard and match the broken section of the cameo."

(To be continued)

FROM ALL POINTS

SUN'S RAYS IGNITE BED.

Through a flaw in the window pane a hot sun focused its rays upon the bed on which seven-months old Maggie Perkovich, Benwood, W. Va., was sleeping. The bed was set afire and the baby burned to death.

The fire, which started in the child's bedclothes, was not discovered until it had gained considerable headway, and before it was extinguished the house was partly destroyed.

TRAFFIC SIGNALS BY WOODEN HAND.

The latest device to simplify the task of the auto truck driver is a painted wooden hand which is swung from the front of his machine at street corners to warn other cars that he is about to stop or turn.

"The hand comes out when the driver pulls the cord," said a traffic policeman. "It's a good thing, too, as lots of these truck drivers are too lazy to put out their own hands in the usual way. It's distinctive. It gives a clear signal to cars behind."

THE SPEED OF ANIMALS.

Few know just how fast or slow they are, but an interesting computation by scientists is designed to throw light on the matter.

A riding horse covers forty inches while walking, while at a jog trot it covers eleven feet in a second. The two-minute horse, forty-four feet in a second. The leisurely ox moves over only two feet a second when hitched to a wagon and about twenty inches when attached to a plow. The elephant, which can pull more than six horses, moves only about four and one-half feet a second, and running as rapidly as it can is able to travel but eighteen feet a second.

The lion is claimed to run faster than the swiftest running horse, which is from 80 to 100 feet a second, according to the country through which it is compelled to travel.

Some claim a hare can travel at the rate of sixty feet a second, while others claim it cannot travel more than half that distance. All deer are speedy animals. A roebuck has been known to cover seventy-four feet a second when pursued by dogs. The giraffe is said to pass over the ground at the rate of about fifty feet a second, while the kangaroo covers ten to fourteen feet a second. A tortoise five inches long makes about a half-inch in a second.

WATER FROM BEAVER DAM SAVED PEAR CROP.

Water from two beaver dams saved the pear crop of growers in the Entiat district, Washington, recently. There has been a shortage of water for irrigation purposes because of the drying up of Entiat Creek. Despite rigid enforcement of the User's Rights Law, the supply dwindled until drought threatened the pear harvest within three weeks of marketing. Horace Mann, the district gauger, went up into the mountains to investigate the source of the creek and discovered that

beavers had dammed the water by erecting two large obstructions across a flat valley.

The dams were opened and enough water was released to save the entire crop and then again closed to save the lives of the little builders.

That beaver are one of Washington's greatest assets and have proved themselves of more value to farmers than gold during droughts is the belief of every grower in the Entiat section.

Damages by such fur-bearing animals are easily offset by the amount of good accomplished in the building of dams and reservoirs.

Spring floods are diminished by numerous dams across streams which serve to provide a more constant flow of water for irrigation purposes.

Although beaver are protected in this State, next January an open season will permit trappers to slaughter them for thirty days.

A big conference of growers and sportsmen will be held at Wenatchee Aug. 15 to protest the death sentence of this valuable animal at the hands of the Legislature.

Beaver are thriving wonderfully in all the water courses of the Northwest.

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The Counterfeiter's Daughter

By HORACE APPLETON.

The Barker residence, on Vernon avenue, Chicago, had for a long time stood empty.

The placard "To Let," which was pasted on its front, had almost become illegible from the beating of the elements against it.

The elegant lawn which fronted the house had become unkempt and slovenly, being overgrown with ugly weeds, which had choked and crowded out the beautiful flowers that had brightened the beautiful place and made it a pleasure to its owner and a matter of pride to his wealthy neighbors.

During the occupancy of the mansion by Mr. Barker and his family it had been the scene of many notable social gatherings, and when Mr. Barker announced his intention to rent his house and spend two or three years abroad, society received the intelligence with regret, regarding his intention to go from their midst as an almost irreparable loss to Garden City society.

Speculation was lively as to who would be the next to occupy the old mansion, and in what way they would fill the gap made by Mr. Barker's removal.

But speculation seemed to be useless for a long time, for no one came to occupy the house, and the neighbors saw with sadness the decay into which it was falling.

Then the sign "To Let" was taken down, and the intelligence went forth that the Barker mansion had at last found a tenant.

Who the newcomer was, or what were his antecedents or occupation, were mysteries which even the most inquisitive gossips of the neighborhood were unable to penetrate.

The most that they could learn was that he was a wealthy banker from New York, who, having recently lost his wife, had concluded to leave that city, and with his only daughter, a young lady of eighteen, settle down in some Western city, where he would get away from social influences which his sad bereavement had made him anxious to be free from; that he had been a prominent society leader in the metropolis; but since the death of his wife he had become so cast down with grief that he had expressed a desire to retire altogether from society and its pleasures; and that, the better to carry out this object and be free from all the temptations, he had left New York and come to Chicago, where he was unacquainted.

This intelligence was received with regret by the neighbors, who had hoped that the new tenant would in some way take Mr. Barker's place in society, and by his efforts give the same eclat to social enjoyments that its late occupant and owner had.

Mr. Hendon—for that was the newcomer's name—seemed firm in his intention to remain exclusive, for all invitations for him to join the neighbors in social intercourse was positively and politely declined.

His daughter, who appeared to be an exceed-

ingly modest and pretty young woman, seemed anxious to share her father's desire for exclusiveness and grief, and firmly defied all the efforts of her neighbors to become acquainted with her.

She seldom appeared on the street except in company with her father, and when she did so was always clad in a deep suit of mourning attire, and comported herself with a demureness which was quite unnatural in a female so young and handsome.

However, this was overlooked, in consideration of the fact that she had recently lost her mother, and the neighbors respected her grief and that of her father, and made no further effort to obtrude their society upon them.

The Hendons had been living in Chicago only a few months when a skillfully executed counterfeit on the First National Bank of the city made its appearance.

The notes which were counterfeited were of the \$2, \$5 and \$10 denominations, and their circulation became so large that the bank officers became frightened, and at once instituted efforts to discover the party or parties who had set them afloat.

Chance brought me to Chicago at this time, and inquiry among my fellow detectives in the Garden City informed me of the fact that the most important case that they had on hand at the time was the discovery of the author of some counterfeited notes on the First National Bank.

I requested permission of the chief of the detective force of the city to try my hand at ferreting out the rascal, which was readily granted.

The second day after my connection with the case I was walking through Vernon avenue, when I met John Boyle, whom I recognized as a very expert New York counterfeiter, who had been doing time in Auburn State prison for his operation in "queer" currency.

Although he knew me perfectly well, he did not recognize me when we met, but passed hurriedly by, and disappeared around the corner.

Feeling certain that he had a hand in the spurious currency then afloat in Chicago, I followed after him, determined to discover his lair, feeling sure that if I found it I could soon trace out the origin of the counterfeit currency.

He disappeared into the Barker mansion, and there being no chance for me to do anything further without unnecessarily exciting his suspicion, I determined to call on some of his neighbors, to learn from them what was his status among them.

The first place visited was the elegant residence adjoining his.

I was met by the lady of the mansion, a woman of aristocratic bearing and mein.

In answer to my query regarding her neighbor she said the impression was general that he was a wealthy New Yorker, who had retired from business, and had removed to Chicago on account of the death of his wife, and in order to get rid of the obligations that society imposed upon him in the Metropolis.

"Since living here," she said, "he has kept himself very much excluded from society, and, with his daughter, has baffled all our attempts at sociability. Until recently," she continued, "I never met either of them. My son succeeded,

soon after their arrival, in becoming acquainted with Miss Hendon, and their acquaintance has ripened into love, and he informed me last week that he intended to make her his wife. At that I called on Miss Hendon, and found her to a very modest, pretty young woman. She appeared to be bright and intelligent, and I came away very favorably impressed with the choice my son had made."

"Well, madam," I answered, coolly, "it becomes my painful duty in inform you that your son has made a very bad choice, and that it is your duty to do all in your power to break up this contemplated match."

"Great heavens!" she exclaimed, "what do you mean, sir? Explain!"

"I mean," I replied, "that if your son marries Miss Hendon he will be disgraced for life, and so will his family. Her father, John Boyle, alias Hendon, is an ex-convict. He has served five years in Auburn State prison for counterfeiting."

At this intelligence the proud, haughty woman burst into tears and exclaimed:

"My gracious! what a disgrace would fall on us if my son Charles should marry her. But it shall not be—it shall not be," she fairly hissed. "I'll kill her before I will allow her to become a member of my family. I will visit this jade tomorrow, and let her know what I have learned about her, and if she does not leave the city at once I will make her an object of scorn and contempt throughout the neighborhood. The vixen!"

This resolve was just the object I had in view, for I hoped it would be the means of letting the Boyles know that their true character was known, and might possibly lead to revelations in connection with the "queer" currency that was then afloat in the city.

I induced her to consent to allow me to accompany her to the residence of the Boyles, where I resolved to secrete myself in some place where I could hear the interview between the mother and her would-be daughter-in-law.

She acceded willingly, and the next morning, in company with Mrs. Banning, I went to the residence of the Boyles.

The servant who answered our call at the bell ushered us into the parlor, and left to inform Miss Boyle, alias Hendon that she was wanted by Mrs. Banning, who desired to see her on important business.

As quick as the girl left I darted into a little closet in the room, the door of which stood open, and there quietly awaited developments.

In a very few moments Miss Boyle entered the room and greeted Mrs. Banning in the most cordial and effusive manner, to which the latter lady replied in a way that was fairly frigid in its formality.

"It is time we understood each other, Miss Boyle," Mrs. Banning began, in a cold, sinister tone of voice, placing emphasis on the name Boyle.

At mention of the name the counterfeiter's daughter rose to her feet, and stood facing Mrs. Banning with a cold, haughty stare.

"What do you mean, Mrs. Banning," she said, coldly, "by calling me Boyle? My name is Hendon, and I'll thank you to bear that fact in mind."

"Come, some, now," coolly returned Mrs. Banning, "you've carried your duplicity far enough. You've carried on this deception too long. You have succeeded in snaring my son into your meshes, but your schemes won't work. Renounce him at once, or I'll expose you to the world in your true colors."

During this speech Miss Boyle had stood facing her visitor with her form drawn up to its full proportions, her eyes flashing with indignation.

"You'll expose me to the world in my true-colors!" she fairly hissed between her teeth. "And what are those colors, pray tell?" she asked sneeringly.

"Nellie Boyle, you are the daughter of a counterfeiter and an ex-convict. How dare you, with such a character as that, think of marrying my son?"

"Yes," said the haughty beauty, placing one hand on her heart, "I'll admit that I'm the daughter of an ex-convict and a counterfeiter; and, madam," she continued, with cutting sarcasm, "when I marry your son, which I shall do in spite of all you can say, I will be the bride of a counterfeiter. Why are you, that you dare prate about my disgrace? Remember, madam, the old adage, that they who live in glass houses should not throw stones."

During this speech Mrs. Banning had stood a silent listener, fairly overpowered by the cool impudence of the speaker.

When Miss Boyle finished speaking the mother sprang forward and clutched her arm, exclaiming:

"How dare you make such an infamous charge against my son? When you say that he is a criminal you lie!"

"Keep cool, madam," Miss Boyle returned, quietly. "Perhaps in a few days you will receive proof that I speak the truth. Why," she continued, "at this very moment the city is flooded with his handiwork. My father may be bad, but your son is worse," and with this parting shot she walked proudly from the room and left us alone.

Seeing my opportunity I left my hiding place and made away from the house as rapidly as possible, not even waiting for my companion.

Going to headquarters, I informed the chief of what I had learned, and giving me a detail of two men, we came back and shadowed the Boyle residence that evening.

Before nine o'clock three men of suspicious appearance called and were admitted.

We waited until midnight, and then made a descent on the house, and captured Boyle and three confederates engaged in engraving and printing counterfeit banknotes.

Miss Boyle had retired for the night, and, of course, was not molested, but the following day she called at headquarters, and requested to see her father and Charles Banning, whom, she informed me, was her affianced husband.

Up to the present time she has not fulfilled her prophesy to be a counterfeiter's bride, for the law sent the would-be groom and his companions away for a ten-years' stay in Joliet State prison, and thus prevented the consummation of her ambition.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

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INTERESTING ARTICLES

PILLS KILL ARKANSAS BABY.

“Because they were sugar coated and tasted good,” the four-year-old son of Alex Hulvey of Poplar Bluff, Mo., ate forty-five sugar coated pills which he found at the home of his parents. The child was thrown into convulsions and died within an hour.

FORD TRUCK HATCHES EGG.

It has developed that a Ford truck is also well adapted to hatching eggs. Three weeks ago a driver of a truck for a produce concern placed two eggs wrapped in a sack under the hood of his truck, and this week was rewarded with the “peep-peep” of a newly hatched chick.

The owner of the chick will name it either Henry or Lizzie, which will be determined as soon as the sex of the newcomer can be decided.

SWIMS 14 MILES ACROSS L. I. SOUND IN 11 HOURS.

Starting from Lordship Beach, Bridgeport, Conn., at 7:30 A. M. on September 1, Walter Patterson, long distance swimmer, covered the distance of fourteen miles across Long Island Sound to the Old Field Lighthouse near Huntington, L. I., in eleven hours. During his swim Patterson ran into a strong tide, which sapped his endurance and strength to such an extent that he collapsed when taken out of the water at the end of the swim.

SNAKE CUT FROM HAND.

While a number of citizens of the Ward Bridge community were seining in Richmond Creek a big moccasin fastened its fangs in the left wrist of Stonewall Cummins. Mr. Cummins attempted to choke the snake loose, but failed. The brother of Mr. Cummins then came to his rescue, and with his pocket knife in one hand and grasping the body of the snake in the other severed the reptile's head from the body. The mouth of the decapitated head had to be pried open before the wrist was released. Mr. Cummins received immediate medical attention and suffered but little from the effects of his experience.

2,621-YEAR-OLD “MITE” SHOWN IN COIN EXHIBIT.

Obsolete and rare coins, some bearing dates of hundreds of years before Christ, were in an exhibition of the American Numismatic Society, which opened its annual convention at Boston recently. Members from thirty-eight States and a dozen European and South American countries were here and contributed to the display of odd coins and paper currency.

Colonial coins were shown in great numbers, as were Baltimore groats, shillings, six-penny pieces and New York State pieces. What was said to be the oldest coin in the United States and of the smallest value ever issued was shown by a Southern collector. It was a “mite,” with a face value of one-fifteenth of an American cent, and was coined in 700 B. C. at Aegina.

Rare American coins included one of the 1804 dollars, of which it is said only seven are in existence. Fifteen cent pieces, which were never put in circulation also were on display.

LAUGHS

He—The ship I last came over in had twin propellers. She—No wonder you had such a squally passage.

“Ah!” exclaimed the irate father, “how is it I catch you kissing my daughter, sir? Answer me, sir! How is it?” “Fine, sir; fine, indeed!” replied the young man.

Mistress—I’m sorry you want to leave, Ellis. Are you going to better yourself. Maid—No, m’m; I’m going to get married.

She presented herself at a fashionable wedding. “Friend of the bride or the bridegroom?” asked the usher. “I’m the fiancee of the organ blower,” she explained, blushing.

Mrs. Bacon—There is a new hygienic rolling-pin on the market, and they are said to be harmless. Mr. Bacon—I don’t believe any rolling-pin harmless if used as a missile.

Hotel Clerk (suspiciously)—Your bundle has come apart. May I ask what that queer thing is? Guest—This is a new patent fire-escape. I always carry it, so in case of fire I can let myself down from the hotel window. See? Clerk (thoughtfully)—I see. Our terms for guests with fire-escapes, sir, are invariably cash in advance.

Two married men were arguing as to what they would do if an opportunity presented itself of distinguishing themselves by performing some brave deed, when one remarked: “Look here, old man, do you mean to tell me you would go through fire for your mother-in-law?” “Should have to, dear boy,” replied the “old man,” “she is dead!”

A FEW GOOD ITEMS

7 CROSS LAKE MICHIGAN IN ROWBOAT.

Seven students of the University of Illinois and Northwestern University who set out to cross Lake Michigan in a rowboat, arrived safely in St. Joseph, Mich., Sept. 7, according to word received here. The 68-mile trip was made in 23 hours. It is the first time on record since the days of Indian canoes that such a trip has been made by oarsmen. The boat sprung a leak a quarter of a mile after the start, and one man was compelled to bail from that point to the end of the journey. Four men were at the oars at all times.

FIRED BARN IN REVENGE.

That he set fire to the barn of C. E. Dice of Summer Hill in revenge for punishment inflicted on him last year by Dice's son, his school teacher, was the confession made before a local justice of the peace by Cletus Sult, aged 13, son of Alexander Sult, a neighbor. The boy was arrested by State troopers who have been investigating the mysterious fire that destroyed the Dice barn several weeks ago, with a loss of \$8,000.

The boy attended the Summer Hill school, taught by Calvin Dice, last winter, and was whipped rather severely on one occasion. During the summer Dice has been helping his father on the farm. The boy's father knew nothing of the affair until he was called to the office of the justice to become surety for \$1,000 to prevent his son being sent to jail.

LOST DIAMOND MINE.

A fabulous fortune awaits the man who discovers the lost diamond mine of Arkansas. There are indisputable indications that such a mine exists, according to a statement of Capt. Frederick C. Packer, an English diamond mining expert, who has twice come to this country from Kimberley, South Africa, in search of the lost mine.

Due to the peculiarity of the natural process by which diamonds were formed in the dim ages of the past, Captain Packer said, the indications of a diamond field may be found a long distance from the field. These indications have been found in a certain part of Arkansas, but the mine has not been discovered. It may be near the Oklahoma line, he asserts.

STRINGS OF WOOD INSTEAD OF SAWDUST.

There is in practical operation at the plant of the Wilson-Otwell Manufacturing Company, Jacksonville, Fla., a machine that is expected to revolutionize the saw mill industry by converting sawdust, now a waste product, into a valuable commodity.

This process, which gives out a long string, instead of the powdery sawdust generally familiar, consists of cutting the logs lengthwise with a rip-saw. The strips, as soft to the touch as

animal wool, make a splendid packing; but they have a greater value by far than that.

One of the great business problems of the country has been the shortage of wood pulp from which to manufacture print paper. It is said that this ribbon sawdust, as it is called, will meet every need of the paper manufacturers. Ordinary sawdust cannot be used, as paper of any kind requires a fibre of a certain length. In sawdust the fibre has been broken up, but it is preserved intact in the ribbon sawdust, and it has been estimated that the acids can separate the fibres within thirty minutes.

The log is laid lengthwise and is made fast by a small steam pump, or "canno," as it is called. The log sweeps back and forth into the teeth of a band saw, moving at an average speed of two miles a minute. As soon as the metal strikes the wood, there is a loud purr and the long, stringy shavings are thrown across the room like water from the nozzle of a fire hose. The carriage on which the log is mounted is reversible and the saw takes a double bite.

THE ARCHIMEDEAN MONKEY.

If the brain of a monkey can discover the principle of the lever, how near akin is it to Archimedes? Dr. W. T. Hornaday, director of the New York Zoological Gardens, certainly a well qualified student of animal life, both wild and domestic, is reported as follows by a correspondent of the International News Service:

"One of the most interesting cases I can attest is that of an orang-outang in this zoo, that discovered the principle of the lever.

"This beast decided that it wanted to tear down the running-bars of its cage. It was not powerful enough to do so by an application of direct physical strength.

"After studying the situation and experimenting, it ripped down the bar of its trapeze, and using the bar as a lever managed to tear down the running bars.

"Furthermore, finding its own strength insufficient at one point, it called another orang-outang to help it.

"The orang-outang discovered for itself the principle of the lever just as truly as Archimedes discovered the principle of the screw.

"The majority of psychologists in studying animal psychology have access only to tame or domestic animals—the dog, the horse, the cat.

"But wild animals generally speaking are more intelligent than tame animals. This is natural because they are on their own resources to provide for themselves food and shelter and to preserve their lives.

"From long observation I am convinced that some of the higher wild animals have intelligence superior to that of the lowest form of human intelligence, and, therefore, I am willing to lay down the original proposition with little fear of scientific contradiction, that higher animals are just as likely to have souls as are lower members of the human race."

THE NEWS IN SHORT ARTICLES

ATTACKED BY SEA GULLS.

Even the timorous seagull will turn. Alexander Duncan of Gauldry, on the River Tay, Fife-shire, was attacked by seagulls while walking along the sands between Tayport and Leuchers.

The gulls, numbering several hundred, evidently resented his intrusion into an area where their young were running in and out among the grass, and swooped down furiously upon him time after time. Mr. Duncan had to run a considerable distance before the gulls gave up the chase.

SPRINTS 160 MILES IN 28 HOURS AND 20 MINUTES.

A man forty-four years old, wearing running costume and Indian moccasins, turned off Broadway and hopped up the steps of City Hall at 1.20 o'clock P. M., Sept. 5, having made a continuous run from the State House at Albany, 160 miles, in twenty-eight hours and twenty minutes, with twenty minutes consumed in stops for lunch.

He is Samuel A. Johnson, semi-professional runner and newsboy, with a stand at 34th Street and Broadway.

It is doubtful if, since the days of Indian runners, this particular feat has ever before been accomplished. Indian runners probably never made it in so fast time, as the post road of to-day far outclasses any trail then existing as a sprinting path. Johnson, who has been running twenty-two years, made the journey to win a wager of \$1,000 that he could do it in less than thirty hours. The wager was made with Miss Margaret Gast, former woman motorcycle champion, who paced him in her machine.

The start was made at 9 A. M. Sunday. Hudson was reached, thirty-three miles, at 2.50 P. M., and a stop was made to eat. Immediately off again, he plugged along until 1 A. M., yesterday, when he increased his pace to a mile in six minutes and kept this up regularly until 4.30 o'clock. During the night his pacemaker had to keep ahead of him or behind him because of engine trouble, so that much of the way he sped in total darkness, once running full-tilt into a fence and often being blinded by automobile headlights he met.

Johnson's moccasins are of his own contrivance, consisting of a regular Indian moccasin with a thicker sole than usual. He was met in Harlem by Leonard M. Whitney of No. 140 Wadsworth Avenue, who rubbed him down at City Hall. On the way he consumed three cups of tea, three glasses of milk, three pieces of toast, six poached eggs, and a pound and a half of grapes.—*N. Y. World*.

65 RATTLE & HUNTERS AT BARBECUE.

Sixty-five professional snake catchers from the chaparral region of southwest Texas and Mexico

were guests of W. A. King at the latter's snake farm near Brownsville, Texas, a few days ago. King sent invitations to these men to come to his place and attend a barbecue in their honor. All of them are in his employ as snake catchers. It was a picturesque gathering of Mexicans and Americans who have spent their lives in the open, studying the habits and haunts of the rattlesnake, which is the chief type of reptile dealt in by King.

The guests had a big time at the barbecue. When they had finished with the feast they sat around and talked about snakes. Some of them had thrilling stories to tell of their experiences. Pedro Saenz, who, for the last twenty years, has been a snake hunter in the Soto la Marina region of Mexico, told the story of how he lay down one night upon the ground to sleep and when he awoke the next morning he found his improvised bed surrounded by rattlesnakes—hundreds of them, according to Saenz.

He had taken the precaution to lay a hair rope around his bed when he lay down. No snake will attempt to cross a hair rope. This saved his life, he thinks. Saenz got busy when he found the multitude of snakes so close at hand and when he had finished with his long pole with the snare at the end of it he had collected more than three hundred of the venomous reptiles and had them all snugly placed in his stout gunny-sack.

King is the largest snake dealer in the United States, it is said. He has been in the business for many years. He supplies museums, shows and others throughout the country with reptiles. He also does quite a business of selling snake poison to chemists and medical men for experimental poison. All of the rattlesnakes and other venomous reptiles brought to his farm are made harmless by extracting the poison from their pouches, the cutting off of their fangs and the slitting of their poison bags. Each rattlesnake yields about a fourth of a tumblerful of green liquid poison.

The snake farm consists of a series of pens, each enclosed with a high, tight board fence. In the pens are piles of brush and grass where the snakes are kept until fattened and made ready for market. They are fed chiefly on live rats, which are trapped and turned loose in the pens. Snakes that are not well suited for exhibition purposes are killed and their fat converted into snake oil, which sells for a good price, it is stated. The oil is used chiefly as a remedy for rheumatism.

More than one hundred men and a few Mexican women are kept constantly in the field catching live rattlesnakes and other kind of reptiles for King. They are paid so much a pound for their catches, and are able to make good money. Some of the rattlesnakes brought in are of enormous size. The larger ones are usually skinned and their hides and rattles used for the manufacture of novelties.—*N. Y. Sun*.

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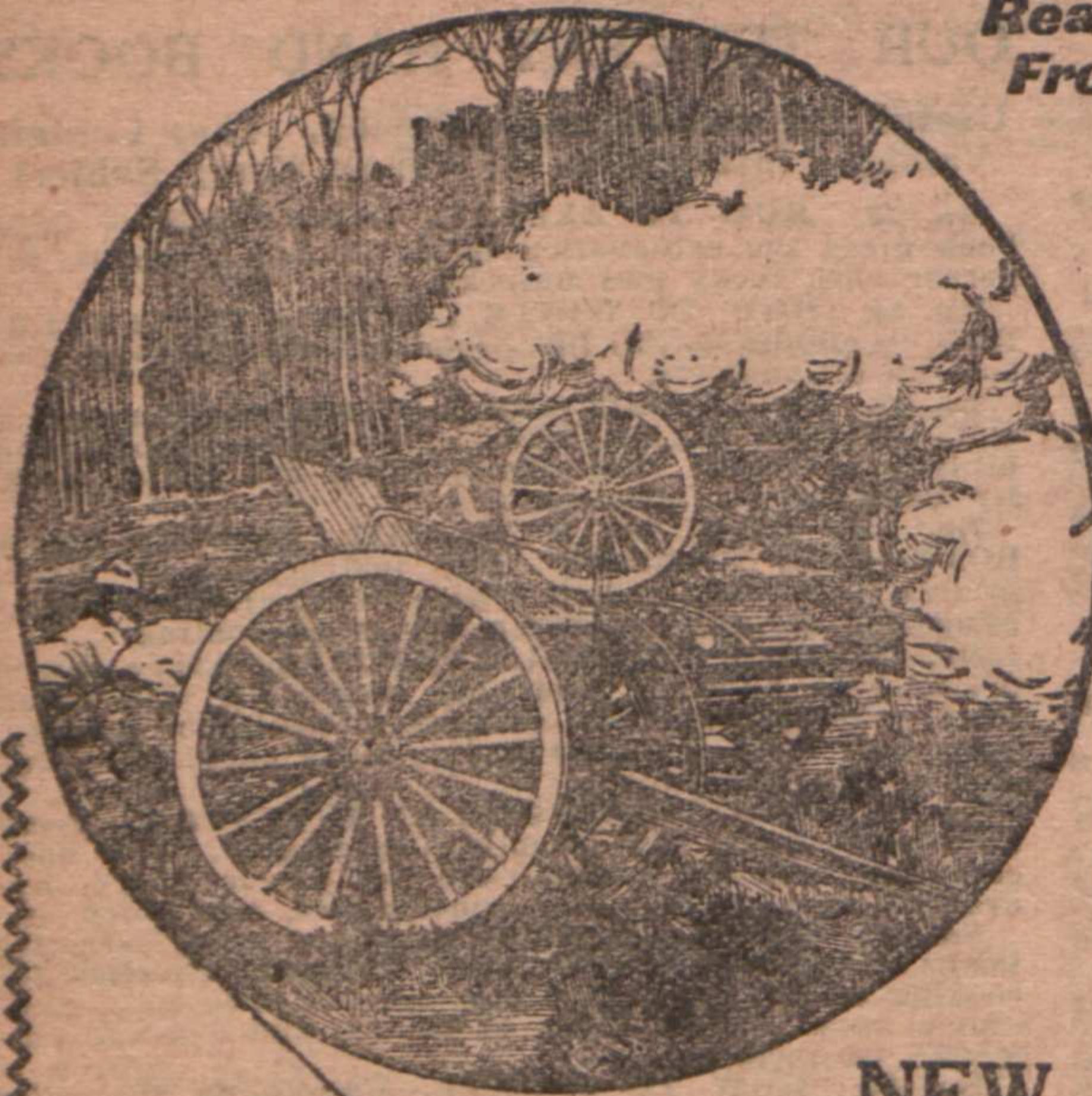
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This Moving Picture Machine which I want to send you FREE, gives clear and life-like Moving Pictures as are shown at any regular Moving Picture show. It flashes moving pictures on the sheet before you. This Machine and Box of Film are FREE—absolutely free to every boy in this land who wants to write for an Outfit, free to girls and free to older people. Read MY OFFER below, which shows you how to get this Marvelous Machine.

How You Can Get This Great Moving Picture Machine—Read My Wonderful Offer to You

HERE IS what you are to do in order to get this amazing Moving Picture Machine and the real Moving Pictures. Send your name and address—that is all. Write name and address very plainly. Mail to-day. As soon as I receive it I will mail you 20 of the most beautiful premium pictures you ever saw—all brilliant and shimmering colors. These pictures are printed in many colors and among the titles are such subjects as "Betsy Ross Making the First American Flag"—"Washington at Home,"—"Battle of Lake Erie," etc. I want you to distribute these premium pictures on a special 40-cent offer among the people you know. When you have distributed the 20 premium pictures on my liberal offer you will have collected \$8.00. Send the \$8.00 to me and I will immediately send you FREE the Moving Picture Machine with complete Outfit and the Box of Film.

50,000 of these machines have made 50,000 boys happy. Answer at once. Be the first in your town to get one.

A. E. FLEMING, Seey...

615 W. 43d Street, Dept. 220, New York

**Read These Letters
From Happy Boys:**

Shows Clear Pictures

I have been very slow in sending you an answer. I received my Moving Picture Machine a few weeks ago and I think it is a dandy, and it shows the pictures clear just as you said it would. I am very proud of it. I thank you very much for it and I am glad to have it. I gave an entertainment two days after I got it. Leopold Lamentagne, 54 Summer Ave., Central Falls, R. I.

**Sold His for \$10.00
and Ordered Another**

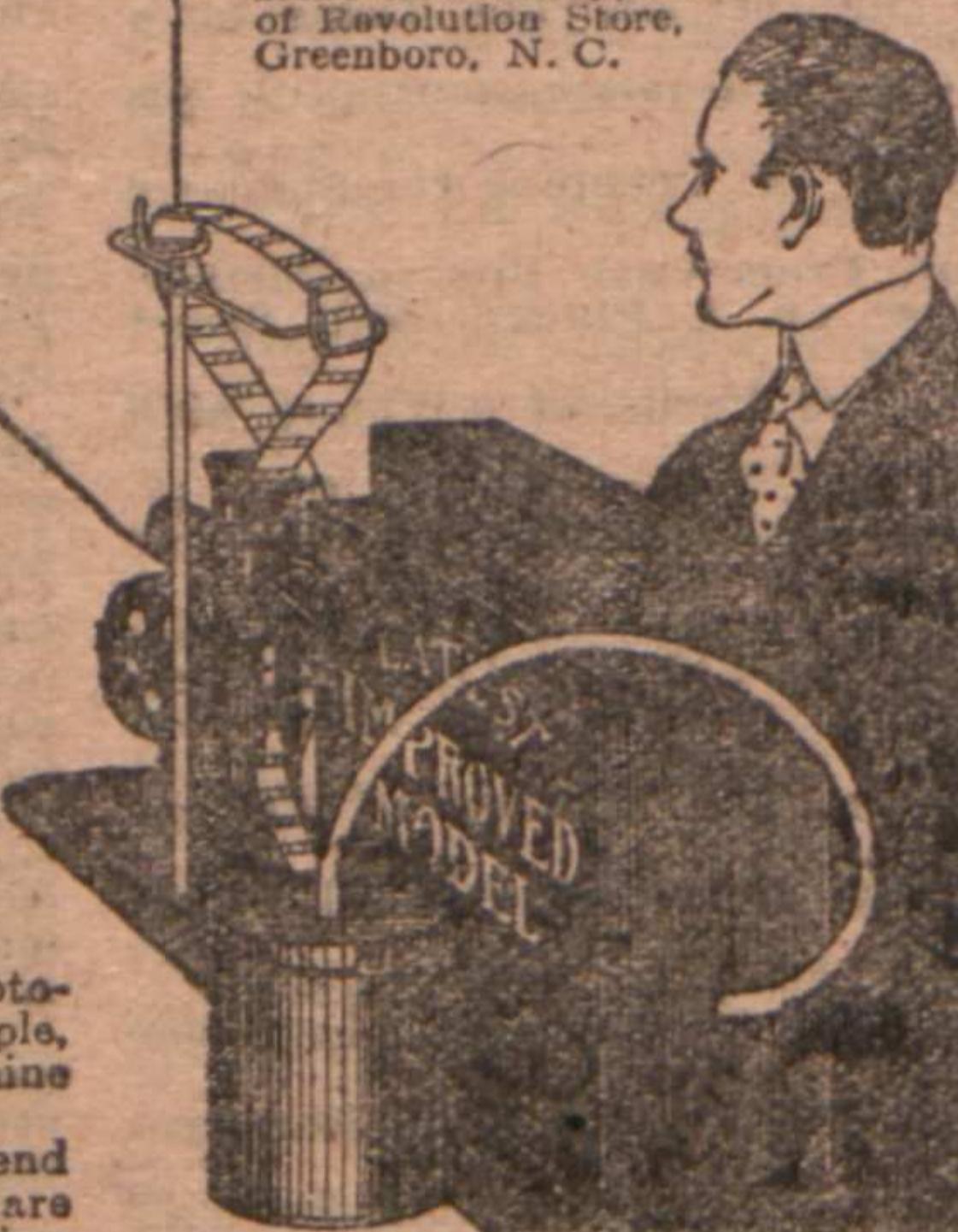
Some time ago I got one of your Machines and I am very much pleased with it. After working it for about a month I sold it for \$10.00 to a friend of mine. He has it and entertains his family nightly. I have now decided to get another one of your machines. Michael Ehereth, Mandan, N. Dak.

**Would Not Give Away
for \$25.00**

My Moving Picture Machine is a good one and I would not give it away for \$25.00. It's the best machine I ever had and I wish everybody could have one. Addie Bresky, Jeanneville, Pa. Box 34.

**Better Than a \$12.00
Machine**

I am slow about turning in my thanks to you, but my Moving Picture Machine is all right. I have had it a long time and it has not been broken yet. I have seen a \$12.00 Machine but would not swap mine for it. Robert Lineberry, care of Revolution Store, Greenboro, N. C.



**PLEASE
USE
COUPON**

**Free Coupon
Good for Moving Picture Offer**

Simply cut out this Free Coupon, pin it to a sheet of paper, mail to me with your name and address written plainly, and I will send you the 20 Pictures at once. Address

A. E. FLEMING, Seey...

615 W. 43d St., Dept. 220, New York

MINING

**TOWNS
ABANDONED.**

Inactivity of the copper mining industry has caused the practical desertion of the populations from the towns of Cobar and Broken Hills, N. S. W. At one time Cobar boasted a population of several thousand people. Now it is but a collection of bare shacks, with its people gone.

Broken Hills, another mining town that in its heyday had a population of 50,000, is also desolate. Early in 1919, when the town's products were selling at high figures, the miners struck and remained out two years, during which time the bottom fell from the metal markets. When the miners were ready to return to work, the operators found they could work the mines only at a loss.

Owners of the mines told the men of their problem and offered to work the properties, without profit, for the sake of the miners, if the men would take wage reductions of 20 per cent. The men voted down the proposals. It was charged that a gang of radicals led in the movement to defeat the return to work.

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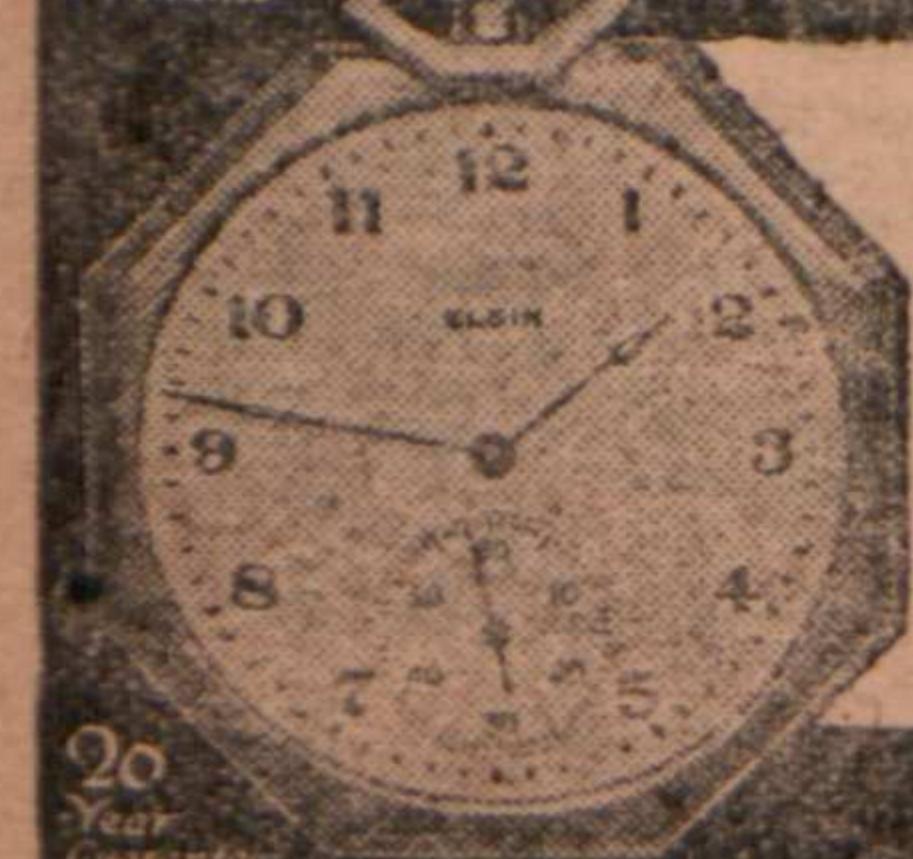
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GALLSTONES Dr. E. E. Paddock, a physician of Kansas City, Mo., Box 5U-201, is giving away a free book on improved method of treating inflammation and catarrh of the Gall-bladder and Bile-duets as associated with Gallstones. Hundreds report remarkable results. Write for this Free Book today.

GIANT CRANE
LIFTS 410
TONS.

The Philadelphia Navy Yard boasts of the most powerful crane in existence. It can lift 350 tons at a distance of 115 feet out from its tower, and 50 tons on a reach of 190 feet. In its test for acceptance it lifted a maximum load of 490 tons. Its extreme height is 230 feet. The rotating part of the crane weighs 2,917 tons, and the total weight of the whole crane 4,000 tons.

Recently there was constructed at the outer end of the pier on which the big crane stands a smaller crane of the traveling type. It was built at the outer end of the pier for convenience, and after completion it had to be moved past the big crane, so that it might operate on the shore end of the pier. How to make this transfer was the problem, until someone suggested that, since the yard possessed a crane of sufficient power and reach to lift the smaller crane bodily, it would be a good plan to lift the little fellow up bodily, swing it around over the water, and place it again on the pier in the required position—which was done. We hear much in these days about relativity, and in the present case, although the lifted crane was small in comparison to its big brother, it weighed 310 tons.



\$1000 REWARD For the Capture of This Man

CONVICT 6138, escaped from the State Penitentiary;

Name, Charles Condray; Age, 37; Height, 5 ft. 8 in.

Weight, 141 pounds; Hair, light brown; Eyes, gray.

Easy enough to identify him from his photograph and this description, you may say—but, Condray took the name of "Brown", dyed his hair, darkened his skin, grew a mustache, put on weight and walked with a stoop.

Yet, he was captured and identified so positively that he knew the game was up, and returned to the penitentiary without extradition.

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